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The Hongkong Telegraph

MAIL SUPPLEMENT.
ISSUED GRATIS TO SUBSCRIBERS.

HONGKONG, FRIDAY, JANUARY 22, 1909.

THE SANITARY BOARD ELECTIONS.

(16th January.)

The Sanitary Board Elections, which are to take place on Wednesday, the 20th inst., promise to be invested with rather more interest than was at first anticipated. The elections are for the nomination of two members for appointment in the places of Messrs. A. Shelton Hooper and Henry Humphreys, whose terms of office are about to expire. Mr. Humphreys does not offer himself for re-election. Mr. Hooper is prepared to serve the public interests for another period of office and it may be taken as a foregone conclusion that his re-nomination will be secured practically without opposition. In so far as the retention of that gentleman's seat on the Sanitary Board for a fresh term is secured, the landed interests of Hongkong will be adequately safeguarded by the member who now seeks re-election. It should therefore be taken for granted that in their selection of the only other member, the persons entitled to vote on Wednesday will not allow themselves to be influenced by considerations absolutely of the vested landed interests of the Colony. As far as we have been able to gather, the vacant seat created by the retirement of Mr. Humphreys will be contested by no less than three candidates. They are Dr. Gerard Fitzwilliams, Dr. R. A. Bellios and Mr. H. Percy Smith. In bringing these names before the public notice for Wednesday's elections, it is not our purpose at this moment to influence public views in regard to the choice of their candidate. Each undoubtedly possesses his own individual merits. Each must also count upon a certain measure of support from the electorate. Each has qualifications enlarged upon by his proposer and second. So far, not only have none of the names lay claim to support from the electors, but none have deemed it expedient to come forward with anything like an electioneering address. We would invite contestants for the honour of representation on the Sanitary Board to come forward and urge their claims as to their qualifications and other considerations which the support of ratepayers in the Colony at the election on Wednesday. Until candidates have had an opportunity of giving public expression to their claims on the electors, we refrain from making suggestions which may be calculated to prejudice the case of those who may not yet have had an opportunity of becoming better acquainted to the community at large; since out of three names presented above, one gentleman is comparatively a newcomer to the Colony, while another is widely known as a third, because of the latter's longer residence in Hongkong. Neither of the first two should be placed at a disadvantage because of their shorter residence, and we would urge qualified electors to carefully deliberate and enquire into the individual merits of the opposing candidates and to decide for themselves without previously pledging their votes by reason of personal influence which may be brought to bear in the interests of one or other of the candidates. Electors should seek to return the gentleman best qualified to serve the public interests of the Colony rather than be guided by personal considerations which may not always further the public weal.

(18th January.)

All the four candidates for the two vacancies on the Sanitary Board have now issued their respective manifestoes to the electors. We reproduce the electioneering addresses in the order in which they were received. We published the first news on Saturday that besides the member who seeks re-election, three other candidates had submitted their names for appointment on the Sanitary Board. A list of the candidates whose names we mentioned in our last issue has since been officially communicated to us. They are Mr. A. Shelton Hooper, Dr. R. A. Bellios and Fitzwilliams and Mr. H. Percy Smith. The certainty of Mr. Shelton Hooper's return because of the large amount of public service he has rendered to the Colony during his last tenure of office as a member of the Board does away with the necessity of further recommendations on behalf of this candidate. Nevertheless, it may be well for electors to bear in mind that Mr. Hooper cannot be returned unless he secures the required majority of votes. An impression is entertained that voters might well leave Mr. Hooper's name out of count because of the practically uncontested seat which he is likely to secure. It seems hardly necessary for us to enlarge upon the fact that, however desirable and however certain this candidate's nomination may be if electors choose to have him represented as one of their two members, the duty devolves upon them to fill in the voting paper accordingly. They would thus be left with the choice of one other member only. Were electors to neglect voting for Mr. Hooper, they may be inadvertently doing that gentleman an injustice by overlooking his claim upon public support. We will now proceed to deal with the claims of the other three contestants for the only other vacant appointment. Two of the candidates are gentlemen in the medical profession, and the third, a chartered accountant and estate agent. Judging by the

electioneering addresses of these opponents, there can be little doubt in the minds of those whose suffrage is sought after for Wednesday's election that Dr. Fitzwilliams' address lays claim to the strongest support, irrespective altogether of the fact that his nomination is proposed by a gentleman so widely known in the Colony as the Hon. Mr. H. E. Pollock, and seconded by another member of the Legislative Council in the person of the Hon. Mr. H. W. Slade. We note the fact that Dr. Fitzwilliams, who is a newcomer to the Colony, and the youngest of the opposing candidates, establishes his claim upon the voters on the ground of his professional qualifications; on the fact that he has no axe to grind and on the promise of furthering the largely preponderant influence of the Chinese community in Hongkong. As a section of the Press which has consistently advocated and supported the interests of our esteemed Chinese fellow-citizens, we cannot fail to note with a considerable degree of satisfaction that one of the electors at any rate has deemed it expedient to pledge himself to looking after the well-being of that section of the inhabitants of the Island and its dependencies, who contribute far the largest amount of rates and taxes towards the maintenance of the administration, and public and sanitary works of the Colony, and who are numerically principally affected by enactments relating to sanitation which are from time to time introduced ostensibly for the benefit of the Colony and its inhabitants. Curiously enough, Mr. Percy Smith, whose nomination is proposed by one Chinese gentleman and supported by another, has not deemed fit to emphasize the importance of Chinese interests in his electioneering address to the body of suffragists whose sympathies he seeks to enlist. As an estate agent, Mr. Smith asserts that the contact into which he has been brought with Chinese property has given him a considerable insight into the working of the sanitary regulations of the Colony. If that is all the recommendation the candidate is capable of bringing forward in support of his election, then he has little to commend himself to popular support. The mastering of the statutory enactments of the Colony relating to sanitary matters is not such a difficult task as cannot be accomplished by his opponents with the technical skill which their professional qualifications eminently fit them to accomplish within a comparatively short period of time. Mr. Smith undertakes to approach the consideration of all subjects before the Board with businesslike common sense and with due regard to vested interests. We can hardly suppose that he seriously entertains the belief that he will not bring common sense to bear upon the deliberations of the advisory Board to Government measures of the Colony. The allusion to vested interests is somewhat vague. If the candidate refers to vested interests of the property owners, then we should not hesitate to affirm that he should leave the representation to members who have no axes to grind. In Mr. Hooper, we can assume without fear of contradiction that that Colony already possesses a member who has not hesitated to champion the cause of those in whose interests primarily he owes his seat on the Board. There is no desire to have the representation of property owners duplicated. The constitution of the Board should be of such a character as to embrace all interests, rather than the preponderance of any one in particular. We are cognizant of the fact that Mr. Smith has the backing of an influential body of electors in the property interests of the Colony by reason of his business connections. It is not always, however, that the interests of landlords and tenants are identical. When we are reminded of the net result of the recent Tuberculosis Congress in the United States, we recall the fact that all legislation in the direction of the improvement of the conditions in which the labouring classes live does not always reconcile the interests of the land-owning class with those of the occupiers of tenements who form by far the greater number to be considered. As to Dr. Bellios' candidature, his manifesto speaks for itself. It must also be considered that he will most likely be supported by a community also possessing important commercial connections with the Colony. But whether numerically they can successfully be pitted against those other sections, his rivals are appealing to, the result of the polling alone on Wednesday can tell. A doubt has arisen in the minds of civil servants whether it would be politic for them to cast their votes at the forthcoming elections. By law, they possess that right, and it will be matter for satisfaction for the public in general and for the candidates in particular to know that an inquiry having been addressed to the Governor, His Excellency has replied that members of the public service will be free to vote according to their own conscientious convictions. The elections on Wednesday have aroused a great deal more interest than has been evinced in similar elections for some time past. The outcome of the contest will be looked forward to with pleasurable anticipations by the community at large.

THE ENEMY OF THE RAT.

That the most effective means of exterminating the rat by raising a specialized breed of cats, the natural enemy of the pest, is the belief of Prof. Robert Koch and other scientists who have made a study of plague preventive measures. The destruction of rats by mechanical means, such as trapping and poisoning, results in lessening the numbers despite the remarkable reproductive qualities of the pest, yet the scientists believe that to exterminate the rat utterly, one of nature's boundless resources must be employed. We learn from a Seattle contemporary that Dr. F. S. Bourne, chief medical inspector, who has been conducting the campaign against rats, under the direction of Health Commissioner, E. Crichton, has urged that householders as well as business men have cats and that the average house cat, well fed and content to lie back of the kitchen range, is not the animal that science is looking for. The ideal rat is one that has its natural antipathy for rats cultivated to a fine point; one that will seek for and destroy rats as its life work. In India and Japan, men engaged in plague-preventive work have been experimenting with natural enemies of the rat pest. A number of voracious animals have been used, among them the cheetah, of Egypt, the mongoose, of India, and the European ferret. The fact that the animals just named do not confine their hunting to rats, but destroy domestic poultry, is a serious drawback to their use. The scientists found an animal in the cat that, since the beginning, has made war on the rat. They do no harm, and when properly trained, are the best agents that have yet been utilized in the prophylaxis of plague. At present, the scientists are carrying on a world-wide search for strains of cats that are specially adapted to destroying rats. The scientists have suggested that a system of prizes be offered for the best strains of cats whose ability as rat-killers has been proved. In Seattle there are several cats whose ability and voracity in hunting rats could hardly be excelled. The Morgan Oyster Company has a fierce-eyed creature that is never so happy as when on the trail of a rat. Before the cat came, rats romped about the place. Now the Morgan Oyster Company will give a prize for any trace of a rat about its buildings. The Seattle Transfer Company has a cat whose ability as a rat-killer has been frequently demonstrated. There are several of the warehouses on the water front that have felines whose breeding especially adapts them to the anti-pest work. Except for mildly-frightening rats, the average sleek, contented house cat is useless. It has been observed in many cases that the presence of a cat of any kind serves to frighten rats off the premises, but the real benefit has not been fully determined. It has also been observed that the hunting instinct reaches its highest development in the female cat. Just as the Angora and the Manx cats were raised, the scientists hope to specialize the hunting instinct in the rat exterminator. That the improved strains will be of large use in order to cope with big rats will be necessary. Also it is likely that its voracity will detract somewhat from its qualities as a household pet. Prof. Robert Koch, during a recent visit to Japan, suggested the following system for employing cats in anti-pest work:—

TRADE IN JAPAN.

(20th January.)

According to the commercial intelligence received through the *Kobe Herald*, all the leading papers and economic magazines are agreeing in saying that the money market will continue to get easier and that the Bank will ere long have to lower their rates.

this connection, the *Tokio Asahi* publishes a statement made by a certain financial authority of high standing. He is reported to have said that the favourable condition exhibited by the foreign trade at the end of last year will undoubtedly be maintained. This may be anticipated with special confidence in regard to the raw silk trade; 6,500 packages have already been exported since the New Year, and it is believed that the trade in this commodity will become even more favourable. Under these circumstances, if there is not an exceptionally large import of cotton, the foreign trade should result in an excess of exports in even the first half of the year. Moreover, the prices of silver and copper have of late been rising, the former now standing at over 23d. and the latter at over 25d., and as they are likely to rise higher, Japan's trade with China is sure to improve. The same authority pointed out that the money market, which was already easy at the end of last year, has now become even easier. The amount of the Bank of Japan's convertible notes in circulation has consequently decreased, and bank advances in general are being rapidly recovered. No large demands for funds are forthcoming, while bank deposits show a constant tendency to increase. Such being the case, many banks will, in their own interests, have to lower their rates at no distant date, and the Bank of Japan is likely to have to follow the example. It has to be remembered, too, that during the current year national bonds are to be repaid to the amount of ¥50,000,000 at least, which is bound to further ease the money market. It is true that, during March and June, Railway Bonds to the sum of ¥250,000,000 are to be issued; but, as they are to be exchanged for the railway shares, the money market will not be disturbed.

promoting cat shows just as in the case of horses and cattle. Fifth—Vessels plying between plague-infected ports should be obliged to carry a fixed number of cats, the number depending upon the tonnage of the vessel. Sixth—Building regulations should require that attics and other places frequented by rats be provided with openings large enough to admit cats. Seventh—In the case of plague-infected districts or areas threatened with invasion of plague, special companies of cats should be organized, and at fixed intervals they should be isolated and the presence or absence of plague among them should be determined. Although no outward demonstration as in Singapore marked the arrival of Sir Cecil Clementi-Smith in this Colony this morning, on his special mission to Shanghai, it must not be accepted for granted that the absence of any outward manifestation of welcome militates against the warmth of feeling with which Hongkong to-day renews its former acquaintance with one of its old-time officials who has attained to the distinction of a veritable Empire builder. The worth of Sir Cecil in the Straits Settlements, entitles him to be ranked with the greatest of the British Colonial Administrators, as his remarkable record of services summed up by our Singapore contemporaries shows him to be. The *Strait Times* writes concerning our distinguished visitor in these terms:—"To a wider circle than ours, Sir Clementi-Smith is known as a Prince among Civil Servants of the Crown, and as one whose solidity of judgment, and variety of experience entitle him to all respect, just as his personal qualities command the esteem and affection of his fellow-men. He passes through the Colony, where he served as Governor with so much distinction, on his way to discharge duties that have a very special interest for this part of the King's dominions. The fact of his selection as senior member of the British Delegation to the Opium Conference at Shanghai is one of the few circumstances which permit a hope that the British Government has not blindly resolved to sacrifice some of its great material interests to the subtleties of Chinese diplomacy or the rantings of well-meaning, but extremely ignorant fanatics. Sir Clementi-Smith does not call here in an official capacity, and we know too much of his independence of character to suppose that the warmth of the reception he receives will influence, even to a fractional degree, the opinions that he may have formed as to the nature of the duty which lies before him. The spirit of our welcome is expressed in the homely refrain of the old song, and it is for what he did to cheer and sweeten life in Singapore, and not for what he may do to check indiscriminate dealing with a problem affecting our finances that we rejoice in his visit. Nevertheless, the fact of his presence here will concentrate attention on the nature of his mission to the Far East. He is sixty-eight years of age, but we give praise to the gods for the fact that while some men may be counted 'too old at forty' the world is still sane enough to attach importance to the wisdom which a sound mind can only accumulate with the lapse of years. We may remark, too, that it is about forty-six years since Sir Clementi-Smith first passed through the Straits on his way to begin the public career which crowned him with so many honours. Some of us are doubtless assured that the soft climate of these Colonies saps the finer parts of human energy and leaves but a husk behind. It is not necessarily so, as the hale and hearty veteran of 68, who cheerfully undertakes new work that others might shrink from, is well able to assure us, and perhaps if time permitted him to explain his splendidly conserved powers he would sum all up in a single word—work. For it is the work into which a man puts all the soul and earnestness he is endowed with that makes climate a matter of indifference, and ensures the preservation of mental energy long after nature has decreed that the purely physical shall enter on a downward course." In special reference to his connection with Hongkong, the *Singapore Free Press* writes:—"His Hongkong experience, culminating in the post of Registrar-General, endowed him with a familiarity with Chinese affairs; the Chinese racial character, and the Chinese dialects, that proved of immense advantage to the Government in the handling of all questions affecting Chinese interests and the control of the Chinese population. In the address from the members of the Straits Legislative Council, on the eve of Sir Cecil Smith's departure a tribute was paid to him for his determined grappling with the danger of the Chinese Secret Societies that constituted at that time a sort of imperialism in imperio within the Colony. There were many who had long experience of the Colony and an extensive knowledge of the Chinese, who deemed that a more complete control could be effected by working through the headmen of the Societies, and who feared that any attempt at suppression would only mean driving these Societies below the surface and thus end in a loss of control. But Sir Cecil Smith had the courage of his convictions, and decreed, through legislation, the dissolution of the Societies and the devolution of their property to Chinese charities and benevolent agencies. The penal weapon was deportation, and it is at once to be said that both in regard to attempts to carry on secret societies, and to the dealing with the habitual and reputed criminal deportation has proved a simple yet effective instrument. Even now, as some echo of the stirring of the

dry bones in China, attempts may be made from time to time to create or resuscitate secret societies in the Straits. But the machinery of suppression, for which we have to thank Sir Cecil Smith, at a time when public opinion was full of uncertainty, is as effective as ever, and will enable the Government permanently to counteract what is a chronic readiness of the Chinese character to have recourse to secret organizations for political or even criminal ends." Concluding a very appreciative leading article, the senior Singapore paper remarks:—"Sir Cecil Smith returns to us to-day as a passing guest on his way to Shanghai where he is to serve as the chief British delegate on the International Opium Commission. In a 'bow sense' Sir Cecil Smith, by virtue of that duty, has once again become the trustee of the interests of this Colony and also of his former Colony of Hongkong. What that Conference may result in we cannot conjecture, but of one thing we may be quite assured, namely, that no better qualified British representative could have been discovered than Sir Cecil Smith, and no one with a more complete understanding of the position of this Colony in respect to the possibility of the proceedings at Shanghai eventually reaching upon our shores. But we know that Sir Cecil Smith will go to Shanghai armed with much special knowledge yet with an unbiased mind. Whatever Sir Cecil Smith sees to be needful to say or do, we know that in the spirit in which he desired to be remembered here, he will above all things endeavour to do his duty."

SIR CECIL SMITH.

(21st January.)

Although no outward demonstration as in Singapore marked the arrival of Sir Cecil Clementi-Smith in this Colony this morning, on his special mission to Shanghai, it must not be accepted for granted that the absence of any outward manifestation of welcome militates against the warmth of feeling with which Hongkong to-day renews its former acquaintance with one of its old-time officials who has attained to the distinction of a veritable Empire builder. The worth of Sir Cecil in the Straits Settlements, entitles him to be ranked with the greatest of the British Colonial Administrators, as his remarkable record of services summed up by our Singapore contemporaries shows him to be. The *Strait Times* writes concerning our distinguished visitor in these terms:—"To a wider circle than ours, Sir Clementi-Smith is known as a Prince among Civil Servants of the Crown, and as one whose solidity of judgment, and variety of experience entitle him to all respect, just as his personal qualities command the esteem and affection of his fellow-men. He passes through the Colony, where he served as Governor with so much distinction, on his way to discharge duties that have a very special interest for this part of the King's dominions. The fact of his selection as senior member of the British Delegation to the Opium Conference at Shanghai is one of the few circumstances which permit a hope that the British Government has not blindly resolved to sacrifice some of its great material interests to the subtleties of Chinese diplomacy or the rantings of well-meaning, but extremely ignorant fanatics. Sir Clementi-Smith does not call here in an official capacity, and we know too much of his independence of character to suppose that the warmth of the reception he receives will influence, even to a fractional degree, the opinions that he may have formed as to the nature of the duty which lies before him. The spirit of our welcome is expressed in the homely refrain of the old song, and it is for what he did to cheer and sweeten life in Singapore, and not for what he may do to check indiscriminate dealing with a problem affecting our finances that we rejoice in his visit. Nevertheless, the fact of his presence here will concentrate attention on the nature of his mission to the Far East. He is sixty-eight years of age, but we give praise to the gods for the fact that while some men may be counted 'too old at forty' the world is still sane enough to attach importance to the wisdom which a sound mind can only accumulate with the lapse of years. We may remark, too, that it is about forty-six years since Sir Clementi-Smith first passed through the Straits on his way to begin the public career which crowned him with so many honours. Some of us are doubtless assured that the soft climate of these Colonies saps the finer parts of human energy and leaves but a husk behind. It is not necessarily so, as the hale and hearty veteran of 68, who cheerfully undertakes new work that others might shrink from, is well able to assure us, and perhaps if time permitted him to explain his splendidly conserved powers he would sum all up in a single word—work. For it is the work into which a man puts all the soul and earnestness he is endowed with that makes climate a matter of indifference, and ensures the preservation of mental energy long after nature has decreed that the purely physical shall enter on a downward course." In special reference to his connection with Hongkong, the *Singapore Free Press* writes:—"His Hongkong experience, culminating in the post of Registrar-General, endowed him with a familiarity with Chinese affairs; the Chinese racial character, and the Chinese dialects, that proved of immense advantage to the Government in the handling of all questions affecting Chinese interests and the control of the Chinese population. In the address from the members of the Straits Legislative Council, on the eve of Sir Cecil Smith's departure a tribute was paid to him for his determined grappling with the danger of the Chinese Secret Societies that constituted at that time a sort of imperialism in imperio within the Colony. There were many who had long experience of the Colony and an extensive knowledge of the Chinese, who deemed that a more complete control could be effected by working through the headmen of the Societies, and who feared that any attempt at suppression would only mean driving these Societies below the surface and thus end in a loss of control. But Sir Cecil Smith had the courage of his convictions, and decreed, through legislation, the dissolution of the Societies and the devolution of their property to Chinese charities and benevolent agencies. The penal weapon was deportation, and it is at once to be said that both in regard to attempts to carry on secret societies, and to the dealing with the habitual and reputed criminal deportation has proved a simple yet effective instrument. Even now, as some echo of the stirring of the

dry bones in China, attempts may be made from time to time to create or resuscitate secret societies in the Straits. But the machinery of suppression, for which we have to thank Sir Cecil Smith, at a time when public opinion was full of uncertainty, is as effective as ever, and will enable the Government permanently to counteract what is a chronic readiness of the Chinese character to have recourse to secret organizations for political or even criminal ends." Concluding a very appreciative leading article, the senior Singapore paper remarks:—"Sir Cecil Smith returns to us to-day as a passing guest on his way to Shanghai where he is to serve as the chief British delegate on the International Opium Commission. In a 'bow sense' Sir Cecil Smith, by virtue of that duty, has once again become the trustee of the interests of this Colony and also of his former Colony of Hongkong. What that Conference may result in we cannot conjecture, but of one thing we may be quite assured, namely, that no better qualified British representative could have been discovered than Sir Cecil Smith, and no one with a more complete understanding of the position of this Colony in respect to the possibility of the proceedings at Shanghai eventually reaching upon our shores. But we know that Sir Cecil Smith will go to Shanghai armed with much special knowledge yet with an unbiased mind. Whatever Sir Cecil Smith sees to be needful to say or do, we know that in the spirit in which he desired to be remembered here, he will above all things endeavour to do his duty."

KOWLOON-CANTON RAILWAY.

ESTIMATE OF COST.

On the 17th ult., Mr. Ginnell asked the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the construction departmentally of the railway through the Sultanate of Johore, which was opened for traffic on 12th inst., has cost, in both time and money, some 40 per cent more than it would have cost if constructed by contract; whether the cost of the Kowloon Railway at Hongkong, though only partially executed, already exceeds the original estimate for completion of the entire work; whether he will state what the original estimate was, the cost to the present date, and the approximate amount for the entire work; whether, in view of the waste under departmental management of which these are examples, it is proposed to continue that system in similar works in future; and, if so, for what reasons.

Colonel Seely: As regards the Johore railway, which has been built by the Government of the Federated Malay States for the Government of Johore under a Convention with the Sultan, the estimate was £1,200,000. No comparison can be made between the original estimate of the Kowloon Railway, which was necessarily to a large extent conjectural, and the present estimate, which is approximately £2,000,000, seeing that the increase is largely due to a review of the policy as to terminal accommodation as well as to the unexpected difficulties met with in the course of construction. The Secretary of State is unable to admit that these railways are examples of waste under departmental management or to commit himself as to the policy which may be adopted in the case of future railway works.

Mr. Ginnell: Is it not the fact that the work executed by the Crown Agent costs more in time and money than it would if it were put out to public tender?

Colonel Seely: Generally speaking, I do not think that is so. I have gone carefully into the matter.

FITTING UP THE "ZULUS."

A MERCHANT'S CLAIM AGAINST CONTRACTOR.

An interesting dispute was heard in the Supreme Court last Wednesday, between a merchant and a contractor. The *Yee Fat Company*, of 60, Des Voeux Road West, used a contractor named Keang Fat, of Reclamation Street, Yau-ma-tei, to recover the sum of \$582, being for goods removed by the defendant and alleged to have been wrongfully detained, and for damages.

Mr. P. W. Goldring appeared for the plaintiff, while Mr. O. D. Thomson acted for the defence.

The managing partner of the plaintiff firm—Li Tsak Chiu—stated that his firm had a contract with the defendant in respect of some wood-work for the steamer *Edith*.

Mr. Gompertz—Was the ship on the rocks then?

Witness—No. She was anchored at Tak-kok-tai.

Proceeding, he stated that on the day the defendant started to work there was a strong wind blowing and the ship had a considerable list. The defendant confessed that he could not work under such conditions and told witness that he would remove all the ship's wood-work and take it ashore.

Mr. Goldring—Did you advance any money to him?—Yes.

How much?—\$250.

Have you the receipt?—Yes, my book was chopped.

Did the defendant remove the old wood-work?—Yes.

And did he put in the new wood-work?—No. Did you press him to do the work?—Yes, but he refused, saying that he wanted money. I told him he could get the money if he got security.

And you cancelled the agreement?—Yes.

Did you try and get another contractor?—Yes; but nobody was willing to take the work.

Cross-examined—When the contract was entered into the ship was in a very bad state of repair, and the defendant was told that the work was his right. The reason why he wanted the old wood-work removed was because new cabins had to be put in. It was much easier to do the work on shore than on board. Witness knew that no work was being done by the defendant. He visited the yard on several occasions, and he could swear he saw no work being done. Ordinarily the work should have taken a month to complete. None of the wood-work was blown overboard. The price mentioned in the claim was for the old fixtures. New fixtures would cost between \$1,000 and \$1,500.

Further evidence was heard.

The defendant asked a special defence, viz., a lien on the goods for the work he had done in the absence of payment.

The case was adjourned.

BIRTHS.

On January 9, 1909, at Shanghai, the wife of Capt. R. C. ATERS, S. M. Police, of a son.

On January 12, 1909, at Shanghai, the wife of GEORGE LANGLANDS, of a daughter.

MARRIAGES.

KOMAROFF-KORE—On the 1st December, 1908, by the Rev. Dr. W. Guster, at the Devon House, Singapore, London, ELISA, daughter of HAMAN & Sophie Korp, Berlin, to CHARLES DAVID KOMAROFF, Imperial Chinese Customs Service.

On January 5, 1909, at Shanghai, China, FREDERICK JAMES DRAKEFORD, fourth son of Samuel Fitch Drakeford, of Melbourne, Victoria, Australia,

Sir Cecil Clementi Smith.

IMPERIAL COMMISSIONER IN HONGKONG.

DEPARTURE FOR SHANGHAI TO-MORROW.

Sir Cecil Clementi Smith, G.C.M.G., the Imperial Opium Commissioner, arrived at the forthcoming International Opium Conference at Shanghai on Friday, 19th inst. He arrived in the morning by the P. and O. mail steamer *Deranda* from Singapore. Shortly after the liner anchored at her buoy, Capt. P. H. M. Taylor, A.D.C. to H.E. the Governor, proceeded on board to meet the distinguished visitor on behalf of Sir Frederick Lugard. The *Victoria*, tender, belonging to the Colonial Government, was ordered to meet the Commissioner. Afterwards, Sir Cecil proceeded to Government House, where he was a guest until his departure at 10 o'clock to-morrow morning.

Sir Cecil Clementi Smith left London on Christmas Eve, and there is a peculiar interest attached to the strange coincidence that he should land here on the eve of the Chinese New Year, which should revive pleasant recollections in Sir Cecil's mind of his former connection with Hongkong as Registrar-General. The following is taken from the *Straits Times* on the occasion of Sir Cecil's expected arrival in Singapore on the 15th inst. and will bear repetition.

The Right Honourable Sir Cecil Clementi Smith, G.C.M.G., the Imperial Delegate, representing the Crown Colonies at the forthcoming International Opium Commission, at Shanghai, is due to arrive in Singapore, this afternoon, and will land at Johnston's Pier about five o'clock.

The P. and O. steamer *Deranda*, on which he is travelling from Colombo, reached yesterday morning, and our correspondent telegraphs that the distinguished visitor was met on board by the Hon. R. N. Bland, Resident Commissioner of Penang, the Hon. E. W. Birch, O.M.G., British Resident, Penang, and Lieut. Colonel R.S.F. Walker, C.M.G., Commandant of the Malay States Guides. The party having landed from a launch, proceeded by motor to the Residence, where breakfast was served, to which a number of old friends were invited.

Subsequently, the Hon. R. N. Bland, the Hon. E. W. Birch, and Lieut. Colonel Walker, returned with the visitor to the *Deranda*, where a number of other officials had assembled, and shortly afterwards the steamer left for Singapore.

Although the ship will arrive at the P. & O. wharf earlier in the afternoon, as already stated, Sir Cecil Smith will not come ashore until 5 p.m., it having been arranged that he shall proceed by launch to Johnston's Pier, where he will be received by a Guard of Honour of the Singapore Volunteer Artillery of which corps he is Honorary Colonel. He will then proceed to Government House, where a dinner party will be given in his honour at 8 p.m. The following ladies and gentlemen, in addition to His Excellency the Governor, Sir John Anderson, K.C.M.G., and the Hon. Sir C. Clementi Smith, G.C.M.G., have been invited to be present:

His Highness the Sultan of Johore, K.C.M.G., Sir Arthur Young, K.C.M.G., and Lady Evelyn Young, His Excellency Major General T. Perrot and Mrs. Perrot, Sir W. H. Hyndman Jones and Lady Hyndman Jones, Lieut. Alexander Kennedy, Sir William Taylor, K.C.M.G., Hon. W. Evans, Hon. J. O. and Mrs. Anthonis, Hon. W. J. and Mrs. Napier, Colonel A. and Mrs. Murray, Mr. Justice T. Sercombe-Smith, Hon. Tan Jiah Kim, Hon. John and Mrs. Anderson, Hon. Dr. D. J. and Miss Galloway, Hon. E. C. and Mrs. Ellis, Hon. T. S. Baker, Hon. H. D. Barnes, Mr. W. C. McNeill, Mr. G. A. Talbot, Mr. C. B. Buckley, Lieut. Colonel Broadrick and Mrs. Broadrick, Captain H. F. Stuckey and Mrs. Stuckey, Captain H. M. Holland and Mrs. Holland, Lieutenant C. H. Gay and Mrs. Gay.

After the dinner, there will be a reception at 9.30 p.m. at Government House, in order to give Sir Cecil Clementi Smith an opportunity of meeting old Singapore friends. As there appears to be some misunderstanding respecting the nature of this function, we are authorised to state that it is a general reception.

HIS CAREER.

There are thirty-seven plain we beg their pardon—thirty-seven gentlemen in the Colonial Office list who are called simply Smith, besides three Smyths and a hyphenated gentleman, whose second barrel does not bear out the unimpeachable Britishness of Smith. Our Smith is, of course, Sir Cecil Clementi Smith, who arrives here this evening and will doubtless look a good deal like the old man who used to be the life of the party at the old-time parties at the old-time houses. Personally, we cannot conceive a more unkind welcome to a place in which one was supposed to know everybody, than coming back sixteen years later and being invited to meet those who know us, then, it would be a great pleasure to meet those that one was likely to remember; but to have to puzzle a brain about features and names lost sight of for sixteen years would be a severe ordeal. But then we have never held favour at Government House and therefore have not had the training to distinguish and remember the faces and names of hundreds of people; or pretend to do so. There won't be many hundreds in Singapore able to prove even a nodding acquaintance with a sixteen-year-old Governor. And he, best in a quiet retirement to Hertfordshire, immersed in the joys of the Homeland, and some of its political turmoil, will indeed be a wonderful man to recall fifty of them. He only recognised twenty, and gave the twenty old-timers a genuine chance of recognition, from what we remember of Sir Cecil Clementi Smith he will count it not an ordeal, but a pleasure.

It is a pleasure to recall something about the best-liked Governor in the Straits. (N.B. All Governors who come back here sixteen years after retirement will be the "best-liked," just as every holder of a Commission is a trusty and well-beloved subject.) C.S. was born in 1830, so it will be better to say that he is an old St. Paul's boy, and went out for Hongkong as a student interpreter in 1852. That puts out of court a good many who would like to claim that they were at college with him at Corpus Christi. He filled all sorts of offices in Hongkong but did not come to the Straits Settlements as Colonial Secretary till 1878. To get our ideas fixed, let us inquire what happened just about that time in Singapore. Well, the Hongkong and Shanghai Bank had only that year opened its Singapore Branch; Charles Simon, T. Lloyd in Powell & Co., and Mr. Buckley is described as a law clerk of Stamford. The telegraph between Singapore and Hongkong had only been opened seven years, and the Straits had been admitted to the Postal Union the previous year. One is almost afraid to look through the directory of the year of Sir Cecil Smith's coming to the Straits, but these things happened during Cecil Smith's first two years' office. The Singapore Club and the *Club de la Mer* were opened, the

Tan Kim Seng fountain began to play. Johnston's pier was not in its present form and Robinson & Co.'s and the forgotten A. L. Johnston's food where the Hongkong Bank is now. The first passenger train ran from Port Weld to Taipeh with acting Governor and Mrs. Clementi Smith on board. They think very small beer of the Port Weld-Taipeh branch now, as a sort of absolute tramway that served its purpose. Mr. Smith also turned the water into the new 24-inch water main in Singapore. In '87 Cecil Smith came back again and saw the disbanding of the old Singapore Volunteer Corps and the formation of the Singapore Volunteer Artillery. He made a perilous voyage to Pahang, the first Governor to visit that wild and desperate state. The statue of the Queen which looks so well at Government House was put in just 20 years ago. Sir Cecil Smith went on leave in 1893, taking his position there. At the farewell dinner in the Town Hall there were rather more secrets in the menu than there are in such occasions. Thomas Sheldoff was lapidary in chief. John Anderson insisted on bringing the Municipal Commissioners to book for too rigid building rules; Frank Swettenham replied for the Native States and got a good one or two at the editors of the Colonial newspapers, as writers who know "many things absolutely unknown to us." [This wasn't one of the rubs, being near the truth.] Altogether it was a very gorgeous occasion (the menu is before me now). The *Singapore Free Press* had a picture of the retiring Governor as he was then. I would ask the Manager to turn out some old almanac and see if he has the block still, that we might see what the First Man in the State looked like sixteen years ago, only it might make some of the old hands imagine that they remember him better than they do.

W. M. in *Singapore Free Press*. There is no danger of that. The old block has been found, and is reproduced above.

The Manager.

STRAITS-OPIMUM REPORT.

PREVALENCE OF THE HABIT.

Possibly the greatest service the Opium Commissioners have rendered to all parties is the collection and marshalling of facts and figures connected with the use of opium. In the absence of facts, those who have hitherto attempted to argue for and against the use of opium, have had recourse to the most extraordinary exaggerated statements. Arguments have been based on sentiment, and on generalities, to such an extent that the truth was entirely unobtainable. Pro or anti, we cannot but welcome the materials which the Commission have got together.

The table given in section III of the report proves conclusively that there is no increase in the average consumption of the drug per head, during the last ten years. The average consumption in the Colony and the Federated Malay States is:

LESS THAN IT WAS TEN YEARS AGO.

But with this general diminution in consumption, the Commission come to the conclusion that there is an increase in prevalence among the Straits-born Chinese, the Babas, their greater leisure, among the well-to-do classes, as well as their ability to afford the drug, being supposed to be the cause. Among the coolie classes, and those direct from China, there is undoubtedly a diminution of smoking during the past ten years. Incidentally, this is an argument to be considered by those who base the necessity for prohibition upon the profession of China, that she desires to stop the use of opium among her children. It is being reduced among Chinese; the Straits-born Chinese owe no allegiance to and are hardly recognised as existing by the Chinese authorities. The matter, so far as they are concerned, affects the British Government, and not any supposed pledge given to or by the Chinese.

DRINK OR SMOKE.

Bearing on the point, is an important memorandum by Mr. W. D. Barnes, which, being in Vol III of the Report, will not be so accessible to the public. Mr. Barnes first tackles the question of the price of opium and the proportion of income spent on it. The average price in 1907 was \$3.25 per talib, the estimated number of opium smokers was 235,000. "The expenditure, therefore, per head of adult male Chinese was \$16.333 days of an unskilled labourer. Such a wage is about 50 cents." The drink bill for England, according to Mr. Dawson Burns, was £110-3 for every man, woman and child. Taking away the children and many of the women, "it is obvious that the proportionate amount wasted on alcohol in England is much greater than that wasted on opium in the Straits Settlements." The only value of this comparison is, of course, to show that while the drink question is unsolved in England there is no excuse for obtaining upon the opium question in the Straits.

The consumption of opium has diminished in the Straits, but not in the States. It would seem that it is entirely a question of price.

INCREASE THE PRICE AND LESSEN THE CONSUMPTION.

In 1904 the sale price was raised by Government to obtain a larger revenue. At that time the Government, the Farmers, and the Chinese all believed that the smoker was powerless to abandon or reduce his consumption of the drug. The farms were let at vastly increased prices, with the result that

THERE WAS AN IMMEDIATE REDUCTION IN CONSUMPTION.

and in six months the farms were in imminent danger of bankruptcy. The result of raising the price was an immediate loss of revenue. The consumption of opium is inversely proportional to the cost of obtaining it. The sales of opium are affected by the fruit season. "In July many Chinese

MUST BUY DURIANS INSTEAD OF OPIUM."

Mr. Barnes' conclusion is therefore that the most efficient means at the disposal of Government to check the consumption of opium is to increase its cost to the consumer. In the Straits Settlements this can be done to a moderate extent without undue risk, the risk, of course, being smuggling.—*Singapore Free Press*.

LADY LUGARD'S HEALTH.

To-day's bulletin is as follows:—Her Excellency Lady Lugard is not so well during yesterday, but has had a good night and is better this morning.

18th inst.

The bulletin to-day says that "Her Excellency Lady Lugard's condition remains unchanged since the last report." Yesterday's bulletin states:—Her Excellency Lady Lugard has not been so well the last two days and there has been some slight temperature.

20th inst.

According to to-day's bulletin, Her Excellency Lady Lugard's condition has generally improved during the last 48 hours.

21st inst.

The community will be glad to learn, from to-day's bulletin, that Her Excellency Lady Lugard's condition, although varying during the course of the day, is on the path of improvement.

THE HONGKONG LAND RECLAMATION CO., LTD.

ANNUAL REPORT.

The seventh report of the Board of Directors to the ordinary meeting of shareholders to be held at the Company's office, Victoria Building, at 11.15 a.m., on Thursday, the 28th inst.

Gentlemen,—The directors have now to submit to you a general statement of the affairs of the company, and balance sheet for the year ending 31st December, 1908.

The net profit for the year, including \$387,410.00 brought forward from last account after paying all charges amount to \$187,835.25. It is now proposed to pay a dividend of 7 per cent. on the paid up capital after providing for which, and writing off directors' and auditors' fees there remains a balance of \$17,703.35 to be carried to credit of a new profit and loss account.

DIRECTORS.
Mr. A. J. Raymond having resigned, Mr. C. S. Gubbay was invited to join the Board, and this appointment now requires confirmation.
Messrs. E. Shillim and C. S. Gubbay now retire, but offer themselves for re-election.

AUDITORS.
The accounts have been audited by Messrs. W. H. Potts and A. O'D. Groudin, who now retire, and are recommended for re-election.

W. J. GRESSON,
Chairman.

Hongkong, 14th January, 1909.

BALANCE SHEET 31st DECEMBER, 1908.

Capital—25,000 shares at \$100 each—\$2,500,000, of which are issued 12,500 shares at \$100 each—\$1,250,000, \$75 per share paid up	
Loans payable	\$ 937,500.00
Accounts payable	104,635.35
Balance of profit and loss a/c	287,835.25
	\$1,589,571.58

Assets.	December 31 1908.
Cash	\$ 4,885.34
Amount invested in mortgages	277,486.08
Amount invested in property	1,221,177.98
Furniture	694.33
Accounts receivable	15,318.85
	\$1,589,571.58

PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT.

For the year ending 31st December, 1908.

Dec. 31 1908.	
To Charges account	\$ 7,631.00
To Repairs to property	594.83
To Crown rent account	1,804.00
To Government rates account	416.16
To Fire insurance account	487.75
Balance to be appropriated as follows:—	
Dividends	\$ 1,030.00
Dividend of 7% for the year	65,625.00
Balance to be carried to new a/c	217,000.23
	\$298,879.03

CR.

Dec. 31st Jan. 1st 1909.

By Balance from 1907	\$287,110.99
By Interest	1,708.45
By Rents	5,661.59
By Scrip Fees	6.00
	\$298,879.03

THE OPIUM HABIT.

CANADA'S EFFORT TO STOP IT AMONG WHITE FOLK.

Mr. Mackenzie King, member for Waterloo in the Dominion Parliament, and formerly Canadian Deputy Minister of Labour, has just reached England from Ottawa en route for China, where, as one of the British Commissioners he will attend the meetings of the International Opium Commission at Shanghai.

Speaking of his mission to Reuters' representative, Mr. Mackenzie King said: "Canada has successfully and definitely legislated in taking effective measures for suppressing the opium traffic. During my late mission to the Pacific coast in connection with Asiatic immigration, I had this question brought very forcibly to my notice. There were seven opium factories in Canada importing raw material from India which were doing extensive business in supplying the drug, not only to Canada but also to China and the United States."

"I found that the use of the drug was not limited to Chinamen, but that white men and women were becoming addicted to the habit, and I drew up a report on the subject, as a result of which the Dominion Parliament has lately passed an Act prohibiting the use of opium except for medicinal purposes."

"At the conference, Great Britain will be represented by five Commissioners, the other States represented being France, Germany, Holland, Persia, Siam, Japan, China, Portugal, the United States, and Russia. The conference was initiated by the United States, and when the invitations were issued Turkey was also invited, but at the time was not able to accept."

"The business of the conference is to investigate the opium trade and opium habit in the Far East, and to offer suggestions for measures which the Powers concerned may adopt for the gradual suppression of the cultivation, traffic, and use of opium within their Eastern possessions, with a view to assisting China in her purpose of eradicating the opium trade in the Chinese Empire."

BATTLESHIPS IN 1908.

RETURNS FOR THREE POWERS.

Mr. McKenna has supplied Mr. Ballair, who asked the total number of battleships built, building, and projected under the programmes for the year 1908 for Great Britain, Germany, and the United States, stating also the total for the two latter Powers under the headings of vessels less than sixteen years old from date of laying down, vessels less than thirteen years old, and vessels less than eight years old on December 31, 1908, with the following figures:—

Projected under

Built, Building, programme of 1908.

Great Britain 54 6 1

Germany 36 4 1

United States 26 4 1

Battleships less than 16 years old on Dec. 31, 1908 (from date of laying down)

Germany 24

United States 25

Battleships less than 13 years old on Dec. 31, 1908 (from date of laying down)

Germany 19

United States 19

Battleships less than 8 years old on Dec. 31, 1908 (from date of laying down)

Germany 10

United States 12

CORRESPONDENCE.

(We do not necessarily endorse the opinions expressed by Correspondents in this column.)

THE SANITARY BOARD ELECTION.

To the Editor of the "Hongkong Telegraph." Sir,—I was unfortunately absent when the result of the poll was declared yesterday evening, and desire to take this opportunity of publicly thanking my supporters, and assuring them that I shall do my best to justify the confidence which they have reposed in me.—I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

GERARD H. L. FITZWILLIAMS.

31, Queen's Road, Hongkong, January 21st, 1909.

FORTHCOMING RACES.

HONGKONG DERBY ENTRIES.

The official list of entries for the forthcoming races has been issued. Following are the Derby candidates:—
Mr. Buxey's blk. Réve d'Or Rose.
Mr. Buxey's blk. Little Gem Rose.
Mr. Buxey's blk. Snowflake Rose.
Mr. Dryad's blk. Trade.
Messrs. Findlay & Moir's ch. Strathdallas.
Mr. T. S. Forrest's g. Argyle.
Mr. H. J. Geddes's b. Fugitive II.
Mr. Olympia's br. Apollo.
Mr. Olympia's b. Achilles.
Mr. Olympia's g. Dart (late Camphor Tree).
Mr. John Peel's b. Garth.
Mr. John Peel's g. Galistock.
Mr. John Peel's g. Fernie.
Messrs. Toog & Speelman's g. Missouri.
Messrs. Toog & Speelman's g. Volga.
Messrs. Toog & Speelman's g. Lestrade.

PIRACY AND MURDER.

PLOT TO SEIZE SCHOONER ENGAGED IN CALLAO TRADE.

One of the most sensational tales of the South Sea ever unfolded is a tale full of thrilling allegations, murder, piracy, treachery, and compulsory submission of an accomplice under arms to be investigated at Suva, Fiji, in a few weeks, when the central figure of the romance, a man named Mortimer, who has been passed under the name of Taylor, will at last be placed upon his trial.

A little American schooner, of about 50 tons, named the *Neuve Tigre*, flying the Italian flag, and engaged in the coastal trade of Callao, called about twelve months ago on a short journey, and was about to start on a return voyage, in the hands of the prosecution, as soon as she was out of sight of land, Mortimer, who was employed as the cook of the vessel, planned the murder of both captain and the mate, and successfully carried out his intention to steal the vessel.

CONFESION.

Jackman, who has turned King's evidence in exposing his shipmate, said, according to the *Sydney Morning Herald*, that there was a crew of four all told, including the captain, Mortimer, and himself, who was engaged in the capture of the schooner. It was apparent that Mortimer had previously planned to take the ship, for they had not been at sea many hours before he made a bloodthirsty attack on the mate. The mate was attempting to some portion of the rigging, when the cook, who had secured a tomahawk, crept up behind him and aimed a blow at his head. At that instant the mate moved, and, instead of killing him, as he intended, the blade struck his arm, causing a severe wound. He made three groans, while Mortimer, who attempted to reach the assailant, was himself gripped by the arm. A powerful man, and the mate was greatly handicapped with his injured arm. After a desperate struggle, lasting some minutes, he found he was unable to overpower his antagonist, and made a dash for the rigging. Mortimer was taken aback by this move, and the fugitive reached the rigging before he was aware of his intention. Mortimer again rushed at him and made slashes at him with the tomahawk, but the mate by this time had reached a place of safety.

The commission brought the captain on deck before he could arm himself; however, Mortimer spied him, and leaving the mate in the rigging, at once turned his attention to the captain. Before the captain could get anything with which to defend himself, he was struck on the head with a tomahawk, and rendered unconscious. Mortimer now had full charge of the ship. He hurried to his bunk and secured a rifle, which he had secreted. He deliberately loaded it, he pointed it at the mate, and then, before the mate could get up, he jumped overboard. The mate attempted to pacify the now infuriated man, but without effect, and after arguing for some minutes he took a header from the rigging into the sea. He was seen to rise to the surface, and swim towards the shore, but a few minutes later he disappeared, and was apparently drowned. By this time the captain, who had lain where he was struck down, had recovered consciousness, and Mortimer gave him the option of being shot or jumping overboard. He chose the latter course, and immediately leapt over the rail.

ORDERED OVERBOARD.

Young Jackson, who had been an eye-witness of the terrible deed, took no part in it, and when the captain jumped overboard he threw him a plank. He was unable to say whether the captain managed to secure the plank, but was strongly of the opinion that he did not see it, and was drowned. The vessel was then fourteen miles off the coast, and it is extremely improbable that either of the men was saved. Mortimer made Jackson or Skanitz promise to stand by him, and assist him to navigate the schooner about the coast, and to help him to the fate of his shipmates if he refused, so he at once fell in with the plans of his companions. The cargo of coal was jettisoned, and the name of the vessel was then changed. The elder man said he intended to call her the *White Rose*, and sail for Australia, where he would dispose of her. The perilous voyage was then commenced. Neither man knew much about navigation, and they always sailed with the wind.

Subsequently the wrecked ship was seen by the *Laurel* and she arrived with Tarawa some time afterwards. They heard Mr. Murdoch, the Assistant Resident British Commissioner in the Gilbert Group, that Mortimer had planned to murder the captain and supercargo of Burns, Philip, and Company's schooner, *Louise J. Kemp*, and to seize the vessel. The native magistrate at the Apuramas Lagoon became very suspicious concerning Mortimer and his comrades, and unknown to them, arranged with Captain Huxley, master of the *Louise Kemp* to convey them to Tarawa, the seat of Government. The men were offered a passage as favour, and accepted.

During the voyage Mortimer told his comrade that he planned to seize that ship in place of the one he had lost, and threatened Jackson that if he exposed his hand he would murder him.

The *Ceylon Independent* of the 14th December last devotes considerable space to a description of the capture of the American battleship *Fleet* at that port, and has over a dozen double-column headings running across its columns in one of its issues.

CANTON DAY BY DAY.

THE AUTUMN MANOEUVRES.

[From Our Own Correspondent.]

Canton, 16th January.

Chang Chio Ki, director of the Canton Military College, who was deputed to Kiangnan to review the autumn manoeuvres there, returned to Canton yesterday.

NEWLY-FORMED DELIBERATIVE COUNCIL.

Arrangements have been completed for the institution of a local Deliberative Council at Canton next year, for which a set of regulations, consisting of twelve articles has been drafted. A board of directors consisting of the Provincial Treasurer, the Provincial Education Commissioner, the Provincial Judge, the Salt Commissioner, and the ex-Tan of Yunnan, Wang Ping Yung has been appointed, and the Kwang-chow Prefect Ko Kin Ching has been designated to be President. Certain members of the local gentry will also be selected to the proposed Council in co-operation with the officials in administering it. The office of this Council will be opened in the old Governor's yamen building.

A HANDSOME DONATION.

Viceroy H. E. Chang has given instructions to the Canton Shan Hou Chu (Board of Reorganisation) to appropriate \$10,000 from the Government funds to be remitted to the Italian Consul at Hongkong as Kwangtung's provincial donation towards the funds for the relief of the sufferers by the earthquake calamities in South Italy.

ARMED ROBBERY.

On the 14th instant, a gang of over a hundred armed robbers attacked the Ho Tung village in Sanui district, and ransacked several houses in all, carrying away with them a booty to the extent of no less than ten thousand dollars. The robbers entered the village at 11 p.m. and did not take their departure till 2 o'clock on the following morning.

GERMAN CONSUL.

Viceroy H. E. Chang received the German Consul at Canton this morning at 11 a.m.

THE NATIONAL MOURNING.

Yesterday, another offender in connection with the national mourning prohibition, was arrested by the police in Wei On Street inside the city for having shaved his head.

OPIMUM LECTURE.

Yesterday the Rev. E. W. Thwing was received by a number of Chinese ladies of respectable families and female students at the Fan Yung College, where he delivered a lecture on the subject of opium, which was listened to by those present with great interest. Afterwards a tea party was held, when the proceedings ended.

ANXIOUS AUTHORITIES.

The Viceroy has received a telegram from the Opium Prohibition Commission at Peking calling for a report showing the progress of the enforcement of the anti-opium regulations in the province of Kwangtung with regard to the percentage of opium smokers who have given up their habit of the drug.

VICEROY'S CONDITIONAL OFFER.

With a view to make the anti-opium regulations observed more strictly, the Viceroy has called the attention of the officials of the different districts to the suppression of opium smoking, and at the same time has promised to make a decrease of 3-2 or more in the number of opium smokers under their respective jurisdictions, in a year.

ECHO OF THE RECENT RIOTS.

After the occurrence of the recent riots in Hongkong in connection with the Japanese boycott, a number of letters has been addressed to the Canton Self-Government Society from various individuals encouraging the people to adhere to the Japanese boycott movement. The Canton Self-Government Society has now again received a sum of \$200 from the Wing On Cheung firm of Hongkong and another sum of \$50 from a Chinese resident in Cuba towards the funds for the maintenance of the Society.

BLACKMAILERS' BUSY.

A person, supposed to be living in No. 12, Ki Hing Li Street, Hsiam, received a blackmailing letter from certain robbers who demanded a sum of \$5,000. The matter has been reported to the Taotai of Constabulary.

PRECAUTIONS AGAINST ROBBERIES.

The Chinese New Year is fast approaching and had characters of every description are as active as ever. Admiral Li Chun has given orders to his officers to exercise their utmost vigilance in anticipation of any robberies.

PORTUGUESE CONSUL

"AT HOME"

"DUART" EN FETE

"Duart," the residence of Senhor J. J. Laria, Portuguese Consul, was on *fête* last Saturday evening. The party grounds of the Consulate residence presented a gala appearance with its long lines of lighted Japanese lanterns and numerous other amidst the beautiful foliage of the tropical trees within the walls of "Duart." Senhor and Madame Laria were "at home" to Commodore, Mrs. and Miss Lyons and members of the Consular Body, including Mr. A. F. Wilder, Consul-General for the United States of America; Mons. G. Liebert, Consul for France; and Mons. Liebert, Mr. G. von Wiser, Consul for Austria-Hungary; and Mrs. von Wiser, Dr. Voretsch, Consul for Germany; and Mrs. Voretsch, Mr. Funatsu, Vice-Consul for Japan; and Mrs. Funatsu, Mr. Fuller, and Mr. Blanchflower, Naval Secretary to Commodore Lyons.

Mr. P. Marty and Mrs. Marty were unavoidably absent owing to Mr. Marty's indisposition. After dinner the distinguished party proceeded to the Club Lusitano where they were entertained to a special performance of "The Galah" by the children of members. The visitors expressed themselves as delighted with the manner in which the little performers acquitted their respective parts. The spacious hall of the Club was crowded.

LAUNCHING OF THE "MALAYA"

P. AND O. COMPANY'S NEW PASSENGER TENDER

The lack of suitable tenders for taking passengers and their luggage to and from the steamers in the harbour here has long been felt, but the P. and O. Company is now preparing to institute a marked improvement in this respect, for the finest passenger tender afloat in Singapore was launched at the Keppel Harbour this morning, and will be ready for service about March 1; reports the *Straits Times* of 9th inst.

The new craft is called the *Malaya* and is constructed of selected hard woods, and specially designed for the comfort of the patrons of the line. A commodious cabin forward will accommodate passengers in bad weather and there is abundant room for baggage aft.

The *Malaya* measures seventy feet in length, between perpendiculars, is fourteen feet across deck and has a moulded depth of seven feet. Her draught is five feet and she is expected to make nine and a half knots. She was designed by Mr. K. G. Yule, and constructed by the Tanjong Pagar Dock Board.

The launching was to have taken place at 10.30 sharp, but after Mrs. H. W. Buckland, wife of the local agent for the P. and O. Company, had broken the inevitable bottle of wine across the bows and the blocks had been knocked out from under the stern the *Malaya* glided half an hour to the water's edge and then refused to go any further.

A dock tug was requisitioned and when a huge cable had been brought ashore and fastened to the *Malaya's* stern, only a slight pull was necessary to draw her into her element, the cheers of British and Chinese being joined as she glided down the ways at 11.20 a.m.

Those who had gathered to witness the launching were Mr. and Mrs. H. W. Buckland; Mr. K. G. Yule, the Chief Draughtsman; Mr. S. A. Lane, Chairman, Tanjong Pagar Dock Board; Mr. W. C. Nisbet, Secretary; Mr. G. F. Robertson, Dockyard Manager; Mr. J. N. Dicky, Government Marine Surveyor; Mr. W. N. Masterton, Assistant Marine Surveyor; Mr. A. T. McFarlane, representing the Underwriters; Mr. N. Weatherstone, Superintendent Engineer, and Mrs. R. C. Edwards.

The launching having been successfully concluded, the party adjourned to the gate house to drink to the long and useful career of the new craft.

OPIMUM CONSUMPTION.

FIGURES BY THE STRAITS COMMISSION.

An interesting chapter of the report of the Straits Opium Commission has reference to the average consumption. The evidence before the Commissioners points clearly to the fact that only the male Chinese population over 15 need be considered, the consumption by women and other nationalities being fractional.

There is an initial difficulty in determining with sufficient exactitude the population, and in view of the migratory nature of the population a five-yearly census is recommended. The quantities of opium or chandu are from the secretary for Chinese affairs, or from the F.M.S. import figures and may be taken as sufficiently accurate.

The following is the average annual consumption per head of the population for some years back in the Colony and F.M.S. in fractions of a ball of opium.

Year	Colony	F.M.S.
1902	0.03	0.04
1903	0.04	0.05
1904	0.05	0.06
1905	0.06	0.07
1906	0.07	0.08
1907	0.08	0.09
1908	0.09	0.10
1909	0.10	0.11

It will be seen that the consumption per head in the Federated Malay States is always greater than the corresponding consumption in the Straits Settlements, a fact which is undoubtedly mainly attributable to the relative cost of chandu in the two places.

The chandu most commonly consumed in the Federated Malay States is procurable at about 40 per cent of the price obtaining in the Straits Settlements and the best quality chandu in the Federated Malay States is sold at slightly more than half the cost of Straits Settlements chandu.

In the appendix are further figures showing that the decrease in average consumption in 1908 was 31 per cent. In Singapore the consumption per head of Chinese males over 15 is 777 and in Malacca 1034 chees.—*Singapore Free Press*.

LARGE FLOATING CRANE FOR JAPAN.

A large floating crane, built by Messrs. Cowans, Sheldons, and Company, Limited, of Cardiff, has just recently been delivered to the Kawasaki Dockyard, Japan, where it has been successfully tested with a load of 185 tons. The job is fitted with two life-lanes, for 10 tons at 86 feet maximum radius and 20 tons at 96 feet radius, and can be worked at 26 feet radius. The motion is effected by a pair of heavy steel screws connected to the back of the cantilever, and driven from a pair of horizontal steam engines situated in the hold of the barge. The framework of the crane is of braced form and of steelwork throughout; the height from water-level to jib-head only at maximum radius is 110 feet. The barge was built by Messrs. Denny Brothers, Dumbarton. It is 100 feet long, 10 wide, and 12 feet deep, the oil fuel consumption throughout. The barge is fitted with all necessary capstans and fairleads, and the crane is capable of putting boilers on ships of larger dimensions than those the *Luzitania* or the *Imperator*. Water ballast is employed.

THE OPIUM QUESTION

CONTROL SCHEME CONSIDERED

ITS FINANCIAL ASPECT

In our last article on the opium question it was mentioned that the recommendations as to what might be done with regard to the drug, would be dealt with separately, says the *Singapore Free Press* of 9th inst. We today proceed to consider what the positive results of the inquiry are in this direction. With the minor recommendations there can be no quarrel. They are that extra prohibitions should be put on the purchase by women and children; that women should not be concerned in the management of opium shops in any capacity, and that the use should be prohibited in brothels. All these are excellent suggestions and will have a beneficial, if minor, effect on the possibility of abuse in the use of the drug. In fact they are likely to meet with such general approbation that they need no further discussion. Having thus cleared the ground of the lesser measures we may turn to the main recommendation of the Commission. This is that the Government should take the control of the opium business into its own hands. In such a course, the Government has several examples by which to be guided. There is the action of the United States in the Philippines, the action of the Japanese Government in Formosa and the action of the Netherlands Government in Java and its attendant territories. In all these three places Government control of some sort has been tried with varying results. As to the Philippines we are at the moment in possession of documents or evidence through this report, as to the success of the movement. As to Formosa we have a very luminous and rather startling document placed before us, which will make thinking people consider very carefully whether it is wise to put an absolute confidence in the statements of China's intentions towards opium suppression. This Formosa document is valuable, because it deals with the methods which a nation, which has distinctly set up its claim to adopt an attitude of moral public morality similar to the attitude of the West, takes to prove that her claim is genuine; and it is moreover the nearest comparison to what may be generally expected from China, that we are likely to obtain.

WHAT HAPPENED IN FORMOSA. The document in question is a letter of Dr. J. L. Maxwell, medical missionary in Formosa, written to Mr. Alexander, and we make no apology for the length of the extracts, from this letter dated July 1907, are as follows:

"The revenue from opium, after the Japanese have been in possession of the island for twelve years, still remains one of the principal items of income, and it is difficult to see how the authorities would succeed in making both ends meet without it, and there is no doubt that they feel this strongly themselves."

When the Japanese took over the island they estimated the number of smokers at 6 per cent of the inhabitants, that is to say before any licences had been issued. Taking their own number of licensed users of the drug as given in 1904, the percentage of licensed smokers is 5 per cent. There are, however, a great many who use opium, principally in the way of swallowing, who do so without obtaining licences. I have questioned a number of natives on the point, and many of them would make the number of unlicensed smokers as many as 25 per cent of the whole. I think this is an exaggeration. If, however, it is 15 per cent, I should think, nearly 20 per cent, then we get back to the original 6 per cent of the inhabitants that it was when the Japanese came. If one were to put the number as low as 10 per cent, which I am certain is far below the true number, we still have 15 per cent using the drug, which means that at the present rate of decrease it will take more than a century still before the evil habit is eradicated."

Criminals confined in the Japanese prisons in the island are at once compulsorily deprived of the drug, and their licences taken away. When these men are set free again their opium licences are returned to them when they leave the prison. It is very hard to believe that a Government which does this is really anxious to put an end to the bad habit."

There are many licensed smokers, with ages ranging from nineteen to twenty-five and upwards. It is impossible to believe that the Government have been children many of them not yet in and none of them out of their teens, when licences were first issued were already habitual smokers."

It is almost incredible the difficulty that a smoker has to get rid of his licence, even though he has really given up the use of the drug. The authorities often refuse to allow him to return it."

We do not produce the above to prove or disprove the ability of the Japanese Government to suppress the habit of opium, but to show that the suppression of this habit as concerns China, the nearest example we have to the possible course of action which might be taken by that country, does not justify us in accepting without very considerable reserve the claims of the Anti-Opium party, that unless we adopt stringent measures we shall not be assisting China but retarding her."

THE NETHERLANDS INDIES CASE.

There remain therefore in local examples the case of the Netherlands Indies, and it is here that we come to the most hopeful and useful aspect of the case for Government control. In the Netherlands Indies at present in Java and the future as according as it is gradually extended all over those colonies the Government takes complete control of opium regulating not only the import of the raw material and its manufacture, but also its subsequent distribution. This goes rather far than the Straits Commission is prepared to recommend, as the Commission's scheme stops short of distribution to purchasers. Now the office evidence, regarding the success of the Government control in Java, both as regards an increase in the revenue and a decrease in the use, is emphatic, and we could stop there could be little cavilling at following a lead so excellent. But there are conditions entering into the adoption of such a system which have to be carefully considered. In the first place Java is not a free entry country. It has established custom houses at all ports of any size, and that means that not only has it in existence the actual system for detection of smuggling but it has that system in a state of such order and good working as comes from a continuous use over very many years. Now the Commission are absolutely emphatic that any attempt to hamper the freedom of the Port can under no circumstances be considered. We therefore arrive at the conclusion that a preventive service has to be adopted without any of those aids which have had so material an effect in making the Government control of the import of opium into Java, comparatively easy."

The evidence on the question of the comparative ability of Government and the Farm to successfully run such a preventive service, is too conflicting to be of any great use. Very capable witnesses, in some cases either present farmers or past farmers, and officials in high places in those departments which deal more directly with Chinese affairs, have expressed absolutely contrary opinions, and we are left to form our own conclusions as to whether Government would be more likely to prevent smuggling than the Farm. This is of course one of the great dangers, because the working of the department by Government will certainly be far more costly than its working by the Farm, and if that working is not to be as efficient even if not more efficient, than is the present Farm in the matter of preventing smuggling, then the adoption of Government control is going to bring about an extremely serious diminution of revenue, with, consequently, a practically certain increase in the size of opium. The new system would of course mean a far more satisfactory service as far as the general public is concerned. There have always been grave complaints as to the treatment of the public by the chintings complaints which may be taken as being quite correctly grounded. Under Government this matter should be improved. And it is in such respects that we are more greatly concerned financially; it is more likely that the scheme would be a comparative success in the matter of lessening the size of the kind, than that it would be wrecked owing to excessive increase of smuggling. In using the words comparative failure, we do not wish it to be understood that we anticipate that there would be an actual loss on the department that would be carrying the conclusions too far."

THE QUESTION OF LOSS. But if this system is to be employed there is a limit beyond which the financial difference between the receipts under the Farm system and the receipts under Government control, should not be allowed to go, because if it does go it would mean the establishment of a very costly scheme at such a sacrifice of revenue, as would be disastrous. The limit of loss, therefore, for Government to fix, assuming it proposes to adopt the view of the Commission. The danger of increased expenditure under a Government system, lies, we think, in the fact that it is impossible to safeguard the economical use of public money, to the same extent as it is to safeguard private commercial money. We see too many examples of this in Municipal trading adventures to be able to shut our eyes to the fact. It would be obviously impossible to allow Government charges to be the same as those of private enterprise, or to be dressed as at present. There would be a decided increase of wages to face, quite apart from any increase of staff, and a very decided increase in such minor matters as uniforms, office supplies, examination buildings, and the general fitting out of a very important department. This would be quite apart from the supply of efficient European supervision, which would have to be fairly large and well paid. Now many of all these alterations and additions would be absolutely added burdens on the running expenses, because at present the Farm simply goes along without them, but they could not be avoided under the suggested scheme because once a Government department takes up any work it becomes the chopping block of public criticism, and a far higher standard has to be set in the conduct of such a department than has to be set when the same work is managed commercially. This is inevitable because it is almost impossible to get into the way of regarding public departments as being run for profit; the very nature of the thing tends to that, and a very strong public department primarily as a means of providing revenue, but of conducting a business process of Government administration in a manner which shall make it attain the highest standard of efficiency practically regardless of cost. That is of course as long as the cost is kept within the reasonable bounds of the department paying its way. There can never be the same careful scrutiny of expenditure in the sense of economy, in a Government undertaking, as there invariably is in a successful business venture."

For all these reasons the proposal of the Commission has to be approached with a determination to examine it in all its bearings very minutely before adopting it. It may be found on further inquiry that there is a half way course. That some means may be taken towards bringing the expenditure of the Farm and the results obtained more in consonance with the views of Government, in the direction of Government control. Some method might be found of amalgamating the department, and supervising the distribution more effectively, but those are ways and means we cannot pursue here."

THE DOWNFALL OF YUAN SHIH-KAI

A TIENTSIN CORRESPONDENT WRITES TO THE N. C. D. NEWS, UNDER DATE 6th INST.

Tientsin newspapers have united in deploring deeply the sudden downfall of Yuan Shih-kai, and some have drawn from it for the future. But when calamities of the most portentous character are predicted as the consequence of his removal from power, one cannot help feeling that to set before the public a different view. There is no wish to say one unkind word about our recent Viceroy, for the ability which is short a period raised him to so great an eminence was thoroughly appreciated and sympathy is felt with him in his misfortune. But the Editor for his return home was signed by Chang Ching-tung and it is not believed that Chang would sign such a document without good reason, and it is in the opinion of the writer that the almost universal kindle will bring about either national disorder, or international complications."

It is, of course, obvious that the reason given in the Edict of a few days ago for his being deposed of office is a mere subterfuge, but there does not appear to be the faintest inkling of light as to what the real motive is. One paper darkly hints at some kind of conduct on the part of Yuan and his party which was supposed to be inimical to the government. On the other hand the almost universal rumour amongst the Chinese populace is that he is being repaid for the part he took in the coup d'état of 1898. We should be sorry to endorse unreservedly either of these opinions, but so far there is absolutely nothing to show that Yuan's removal is owing to any reversal of policy or any reactionary disposition on the part of the Prince Regent. It has no doubt been Yuan Shih-kai's role to play the part of reformer, and his work has been well done; but the dispassionate observer cannot forget that in 1898 he took sides against reform, and by his perfidious conduct towards his Emperor, brought to the front the party that humiliated Kuang Hsi, banished Kang Yu-wei and brought to the block King of China's noblest young reformers. There are those who say that but for Yuan Shih-kai there would have been no coup d'état, and but for the coup d'état there would have been no Boxer outbreak. The Boxer rebellion would be the outcome of the reform which were being carried out, and it may well be that they cannot trust the statesman who betrayed them."

At any rate, if this be the true interpretation, the revenge has been taken mildly, and offers a pleasing contrast to the wild violence of which it is the recompense. Nothing vindictive has been done. Yuan has been simply removed from office under the most graceful of excuses. Even a Bismarck would have spared the country need not come to a standstill, because rather than one in whom he cannot put confidence. The time has come for reformers who believe in reform, rather than men who believe that it pays to be reformers. China has many statesmen, and not a few who are actuated by high and loyal motives. But it is the base of our foreign method of discussing Chinese politics that we must pick out one of China's statesmen and idolize him to the exclusion of all the rest. Once it was Li Hung-chang, now it is Yuan Shih-kai. Having chosen our pet statesman, we must make every thing contingent upon his rise or fall, identify every improvement with his name, and suppose that will descend to posterity as his achievement. But we have ourselves made the spectacles we are looking through, and the more we idolize our favourite, the more we bewilder ourselves. This same habit infects even the most respectable of the home journals. From the pages of the *Spectator* we call to the following: "Writing in reference to the death of the late Emperor, the Empress Dowager, there have been no obstacles in the way of the strong and beneficent direction of Yuan Shih-kai at the head of affairs." Again: "Prince Chun, who will be for all practical purposes Emperor for the next twelve years, is said to be an enlightened man, and he is not likely to thwart the statesman-like aspirations of Yuan Shih-kai." Heaven! it is not time we abandoned this Gallian method of Lilliputian style of discussing Chinese politics? Powerful and popular as Yuan has been, he is not a statesman, and he ever occupied the position of lonely eminence such words suppose."

Let us rather believe the reform movement in China to be too strong, too deep, and to be earnestly shared by too many minds to be arrested by the removal from office of any one man, however capable, and however eminent. To do Yuan Shih-kai justice, he is generally held to have been a sincere reformer at the average of Chinese statesmen, to have had an honest dislike of despotism and of government in the hands of a few. We cannot, however, disguise our conviction that his conduct was due rather to policy than to principle, to astuteness than to honesty. The act of 1898 in going to Yuan Lu and putting the Emperor in the power of the Empress Dowager, instead of putting the Empress Dowager in the power of the Emperor, was the one which revealed his character, and all his subsequent demeanour has not wiped out the memory of it. His best friends could only say it was the mistake of his life. But only a patriot with him in misfortune, but only a patriot more of the cause of his downfall, let us not terrify ourselves with the notion that with his fall must come the blasting of all the hopes we entertained for China's future, or the loss of our confidence in China's good relations to ourselves."

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OIL SPRINGS IN TIMOR.

A number of Sydney business men, including Dr. Elliott, have been successful in securing a concession of country on the southern coast of Timor, where there are valuable oil springs and Mr. F. T. Trouton, who was deputed by the principals to report on the property and the prospects of building up a new industry for Australia, returned to Sydney recently by the E. and A. Company's steamer *Eastern*.

The oil, it is reported, is of excellent quality, and comparatively free from impurities. Great volumes have been running to waste from time immemorial, but definite steps are likely to be taken before long in the direction of building up an export trade. On the opposite side of Timor, it is stated, there are also extensive oil springs, but in order to avoid the possibility of competition, the Standard Oil Trust some years ago secured the leases. Nothing, however, has been done towards establishing the industry there.—*Sydney Morning Herald*.

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DIVORCE IN JAPAN.

SOME INTERESTING STATISTICS.

Dr. Takano, of the Tokyo University, has published some interesting statistics in the *Hogaku Kyokwai Zasshi* concerning divorce in Japan, and we make the following extracts from his article. The number of divorces each year between 1880 and 1898 was uniformly higher than 100,000 except in one year; but since 1899 the figures show a decided tendency towards decline, and the number per annum has now descended to about 60,000 in round figures. Whereas there were more than two divorces per 1,000 of the population during the former period, there has only been about one case per 1,000 in late years, as will be seen by the following table:

Year	Number of Divorces	Rate per 1,000 Population
1880	107,478	2.68
1881	109,583	2.70
1882	112,411	2.76
1883	113,498	2.76
1884	116,775	2.83
1885	114,430	2.74
1886	110,838	2.62
1887	115,054	2.71
1888	124,073	2.87
1889	90,161	2.27
1890	66,620	1.67
1891	63,925	1.62
1892	63,593	1.61
1893	64,311	1.60
1894	65,571	1.60
1895	64,010	1.56
1896	60,779	1.46

From the above figures it will be seen that the number of divorces does not change to a very decided extent from one year to the next, and there is some special cause. The sudden fall, for instance, in the figures from 1889 to 1890 is due, in Dr. Takano's opinion, to the change in the Civil Code and Registration Regulations. The figures rose gradually from 1880 to 1889, but during the two following years when the Civil Code was in progress they dropped, and a similar phenomenon was witnessed during the years of the Russo-Japanese war (1904 and 1905). Thus Professor Takano thinks he is justified in saying that this decrease is due to the agitation in wartime.

Japan is noted for its great number of divorces. During the period from 1887 to 1893 there was an average of 3291 divorces per 1,000 marriages each year; but during the five following years the rate dropped to 2733 per 1,000, while since 1899 the rate has not exceeded 167.6 per 1,000. Even this figure is incomparably greater than that of Prussia, where 21 divorces per 1,000 marriages were recorded in 1898. The rate of divorces to marriages in Japan will be seen in the following table:

Year	Divorces	Marriages
1880	66,543	233.7
1881	63,828	184.2
1882	65,444	167.6
1883	64,139	162.6
1884	64,392	176.2
1885	63,913	160.1
1886	60,061	170.7

The number of divorces compared with the number of married couples is given in the following table:

Year.	Number of couples	Divorces.	Divorces per 10,000
1888...	7,419,953	109,175	147.1
1893...	7,612,764	116,775	153.4
1896...	7,979,858	99,465	124.6
1903...	8,229,152	65,571	79.7

Sweden and the United States are the countries in which the number of divorces taking place is the largest, yet their numbers are insignificant when compared with the face of the Japanese figures. In the United States divorces were only 25 per 10,000 married couples in 1886, and the yearly average for the United States is 10.5.

CORRESPONDENCE.

(We do not necessarily endorse the opinions expressed by correspondents in this column.)

THE SANITARY BOARD ELECTION.

To the Editor of the "Hongkong Telegraph." Dear Sir,—As the electorate for the Sanitary Board representatives has been so largely increased by the Public Health and Buildings Ordinance, 1903-8, it will, I am sure, be a matter of interest to the public to know that all persons of the undemonstrated classes have the right to vote at the forthcoming election which will take place on Wednesday next at the City Hall between the hours of 4 and 6 o'clock p.m.

Special Jurors. (108).
Common Jurors. (833).
Members of Council.
Civil Servants.
Consuls not carrying on business.
Mariners-at-Law and Solicitors and their Clerks.
Medical Practitioners and Surgeons, and Dentists.
Editors of daily papers and their staffs.
Chemists and Druggists.
Clergymen of the Church of England.
Roman Catholic Priests.
Ministers of any Congregation of Protestant Dissenters or of Jews and Schoolmasters.
Officers on full pay in the Naval and Military Service.
Masters of steamers and local pilots.
Persons who are exempt from serving on juries on account of infirmity or of their being over the age of sixty years.

Yours faithfully,
A. SHELTON HOOPER.

THE SANITARY BOARD ELECTION.

To the Editor of the "Hongkong Telegraph." Dear Sir,—I find that by inadvertence my manifesto was addressed to the Ratepayers of Hongkong, and I desire to take this public opportunity of correcting the error. Under the new Public Health amended Ordinance which was passed last year, the classes of persons who are mentioned in Mr. Shelton Hooper's letter as being eligible to vote can exercise the franchise whether they pay rates or not—I am, Sir,

Yours faithfully,
GERARD H. L. FITZ WILLIAMS,
M.D. C.B. & F.R.C.S.E.
31, Queen's Road,
Hongkong, January 19th, 1900.

CHINESE NEW YEAR.

CRACKER FIRING REGULATIONS.

In view of the approaching Chinese New Year, it is notified that permission is given for crackers to be fired as follows:—

1. South. Bonham Road.
2. North. Tai Praya.
3. West. Western Street.
4. East. West Street and Morrison Street.

On Thursday, the 21st January, from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. on Friday, the 22nd January, from 8 a.m. to 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. to 6 p.m.

On Thursday, the 23rd January, from 6 a.m. to 8 a.m.

Within that portion of the City of Victoria not comprised in the above limits, and also within that portion of the Kowloon Peninsula which lies to the South of a line running from the junction of Fifth Street and Temple Street, Yau-ma-tei, to the Northern boundary of Kowloon Marine Lot No. 401.

From 4 p.m. on Thursday, the 21st January, till 4 p.m. on Saturday, the 23rd January, and on Thursday, the 23rd January, from 6 a.m. to 9 a.m.

Cracker firing is to be strictly confined to the times named above, both within and without the prescribed area; and both sides of all streets, or parts of streets named as the boundaries above are to be considered as within the prescribed area.

A JAPANESE SUPERSTITION.

"MOKORI SODA."

A curious custom has been in vogue in Japan from time immemorial, whereby everybody eats *soba* (a kind of macaroni made of buckwheat meal) in the evening of the last day of each year. It is called *tsukimori* or year-end *soba*. Investigating the origin of the custom, a hunter of curiosities in Osaka has discovered that it arose in the following manner. Makers of gold-leaf used to wrap up the gold to be beaten with paper, which in turn was wrapped in a piece of cotton cloth several times folded. The goldbeaters then used to beat the packet thus formed with a hammer. But particles of the gold escaped through the wrapper and were lost. Accordingly, a wooden bowl containing buckwheat meal was placed in the middle of the room, and it was believed that the buckwheat attracted the particles of gold, wandering in the air. Thus, the *soba* which is eaten on the evening of the last day of a year is believed to have the quality of absorbing or attracting gold or money.

OUTBREAK OF RINDERPEST.

DAIRY FARM'S PREMISES INFECTED.

The following letter relative to the outbreak of rinderpest at the Dairy Farm Company's premises at Pokfulam was laid on the table at the meeting of the Sanitary Board last Tuesday afternoon:—

Sanitary Department,
10th Jan. 1900.
Sir,—I have the honour to report for the information of the Board that rinderpest has appeared in No. 7 Shed of the Dairy Farm Company's premises at Sassoon's Villa, Pokfulam Road.

There are fourteen cows, one bull and one calf in the shed.

I beg therefore to recommend that this shed be declared an infected area under the Impounded and Inspection of Animals Bye-laws of Ordinance 1 of 1903-1908—I have, etc.

ADAM GIBSON,
Colonial Veterinary Surgeon.

The Secretary, Sanitary Board.

OPIUM SMUGGLING.

Customs officials in Bangkok have been making some very smart seizures of contraband opium. One could scarcely imagine the various ingenious methods adopted for smuggling the drug. The *Siam Free Press*, of 30th ult., says:—We hear of it being found concealed in innocent looking umbrellas, in double-bottomed buckets, in hollows carved in the soles of sandals and other quaint places that does credit to the inventive genius of the smuggler. Still the eagle-eyed and wide-awake Customs guards are vigilant to the task, but the bulk of a means found to smuggle opium recently which will necessitate the use of X-rays in the future. The Customs officials seized 185 teels of opium on board the *Pleasant* on Monday, the drug being neatly concealed in a coal bunker.

CHINA'S FUTURE.

Sir Robert Hart, G.C.M.G., was entertained at a banquet by the London Chamber of Commerce on December 15, Sir Albert Spicer presiding.

"The company stood to receive Sir Robert Hart when he rose to respond to the toast of his health and loudly cheered him. His long address was followed with the closest attention, and evoked much enthusiasm. He remarked that during his 54 years in China he had been at work all day and every day. He was not a genius; he was not a man of great ability, a man of superhuman gifts; but he had, fortunately for himself and the work he had to do, the persistence which always saw him to the end, the patience which did not stop his work because there was delay, and the common sense which he found people were so ready to recognise. (Cheers.) Those were very small qualities, and they did not entitle him by any means to the admiration which he had received. In the reconstruction of the Chinese Customs he kept some very simple ideas before him. One was to get work through quickly, to make as few rules as possible to make procedure as simple as possible, and to give people who fell foul of the laws of the Customs the credit of doing so rather by mistake than with the intention of fraud—and he found that in that way things went on very much more pleasantly.

He was fortunate enough, too, to have a very fine staff—(cheers)—a staff not of Chinese or Englishmen. In his own office in Peking a year ago they had representatives of 14 different nationalities, working side by side harmoniously and well. At present there were about 1,500 Europeans and Americans and about 15,000 Chinese employed in the Customs, all carrying on their work very satisfactorily, as was shown by the fact that they heard so few complaints from those with whom they had to deal. One of the rules was, "FIRST COME FIRST SERVED."

The foreign treaties with China had all got the most favoured-nation clause, and the treatment which was given to one man must be given to others: the advantage which one Power got was shared by all the others. That was one thing which had made his work there very much simpler and easier. Chinese trade had been growing, but not to the extent to which those who prophesied about its expansion in 1840 looked forward. Still it had grown, was growing, and would continue to grow. When he first went to China there was only one steamer on the coast, and going from Hongkong to Shanghai in one of the tea clipper of 150 tons belonging to Jardine Matheson he had the pleasure of spending 23 days on board. Now the number of steamers was countless. Only five ports were then open to foreign trade, but now one used to see a great extent. At present there were some 40 or 50 at which foreigners were doing business.

RAILWAYS AND TELEGRAPHS.

Railroads, too, were now being opened up all over the country. One day or to-morrow, but in course of time, China would be like a spider's web, with railroads in every direction. The telegraph was also working in a splendid manner and you send telegrams to and from almost any part of China. Another thing that was doing good was the Post Office which was established in almost every town, while in the Northern province of Pechili they had established it in every village. In Peking itself they had now eight deliveries daily. (Hear, hear.) That might sound well to them, but to him, not being a commercial man, it was a painful nuisance. (Laughter.) He remembered the time when they had one mail in the month and no telegrams; they had then an opportunity to read their letters leisurely, enjoy their contents, and think about the replies that ought to be made. Now they had telegrams every minute.

MAILS EVERY DAY.

over Russia and every two or three days by sea, and life was becoming almost intolerable. It was all in the way of trade and, he supposed, paid, but a great many of them looked for the old and quiet days of the few merchant princes in China, and the absence of the many who were coming from daylight to long after dark. The Chinaman himself was a most industrious man. The one peculiar thing about him was that he was never in a hurry about anything. His idea was that the sun would shine to-morrow, and that the earth had not by any means done going round the sun, and if he could not finish what he was doing to-day, he said, "No matter, to-morrow will do," and he went on to-morrow and lived a happy life in consequence. His idea was never to do to-day what could be put off till to-morrow. (Laughter.) And a very good idea that was, because it prevented a man from burning his boats too soon. The truth lay between that and the European maxim, "I never put off till to-morrow what you can do to-day," and man's mind must choose which he ought to follow. Sometimes one was right, and sometimes the other. "Do not put off to-morrow what you would not have them to do to you." The result was the Chinaman let other people live their life after their own fashion, and did not interfere. The result of superior civilization was that he did interfere and intervene, and we were sometimes a little too busy. (Laughter.)

THE TRADE OF THE COUNTRY.

had been developing considerably. Forty years ago the annual shipping tonnage amounted to about 7,200,000 tons, of which 3,000,000 were under the British flag. Last year the tonnage was about 80,000,000 tons, of which nearly 40,000,000 tons were under the British flag. We said competition was the life of trade, and it might be a very good idea on this side, but the Chinaman said competition was the life of trade, not competition, and combination in China had a different sort of meaning. It was the combination which meant to live and let live, which tried to force those who were profitable to share some of them with the people who assisted to make them. In the early days of his life in China he received

HIS FIRST PROMOTION.

In the consular service. His friends and acquaintances came forward to congratulate him on every side, and at the end of the month his cook, instead of sending in the month's bill of \$30 for his chow-chow or food, as before sent him a bill for \$90. He called in his "boy" and said, "What is the meaning of this? I have been living in exactly the same way, had the same food, eaten the same amount, and you charge me \$90 instead of \$30." "Oh," he said, "suppose master catches the chance, boy must catch the chance too." The master got luck and the servant ought to have good luck also. And he (the speaker) made his bow in Chinese fashion, and said, "I quite agree with you, but my pay has not been trebled. I have only had one-third added to it." The "boy" put on rather a serious face, and replied, "Oh then have made a mistake, can make a change." He took the bill away with him, and two hours afterwards brought it back again charging forty instead of ninety dollars. He quite agreed with that way of looking at life, and then he left it thus. There was an unfortunate case of the previous custom, and when any of his guests were going out to buy anything he always warned them, "For goodness' sake don't say you are staying at Hart's, or they will make you pay double." The Chinaman had a grand way of putting things

hands into their master's pockets, and charging just according to his position. The man at the top had to pay. But life went on pleasantly nevertheless, and one could keep on good terms with one's establishment by sharing one's blessings with them—and it was a right that should be done in family circles.

THE SERVANTS IN CHINA.

He had been with him almost all the time. He left behind him at Peking a lad who had been with him since 1859—40 years' service in one house! (Cheers.) In that way they kept up the pleasant family circle. The combination of the Chinese was merely to ensure that there should not be the kind of competition which meant death to your competitor. In Canton, for instance, all the boot shops were in the same street; each had its own clients, and they did not attempt to undersell each other. The same was the case with the dress-makers and the tailors. If they liked, but they never did so because the master, recognising their power, paid them wages which satisfied them, and which ought to be paid. As to the future of China if they would imagine what a country of 400,000,000 square miles could produce in the way of food and material, and what a people numbering 400,000,000 might do if they turned their heads and arms in the right direction—and they were doing so—they would see that there was certainly a future for that country.

CHINA'S FUTURE ARMY.

He had given expression to lately in connection with the far distant future of China. The Chinaman was a very reasonable person, and his custom had been to settle matters by voice and not by the sword; he wished to appeal to reason rather than to might, and he had abhorred the military life and the doings of military people. But he found that the competition of European life was coming so close to him that it was absolutely necessary for him, in order to stand on his own feet, to supply himself with those very strong crutches, as army and navy, and army and navy he would have later on. But it would be a long time before the Chinese were real soldiers, for they had abhorred the idea of the use of force through so many years that heredity had made it part and parcel of their composition: and although they could shoot straight and learn a good step perhaps more quickly than a European soldier would, they had not got the heart for fighting, and it would take generations before they had it. But it would come, and their army would increase; and 400,000,000 or 300 years they might have their own great army, and their own fashion. A territorial army of voluntary soldiers might be the best thing in the world, but it did not always supply the greatest number of men that might be wanted. On the other hand, conscription interfered greatly with the happiness of people's homes, but it set people up and gave a nation a great number of men to depend upon. China would, in all probability, mix the two things. He did not think it would ever keep up a very large standing army, but it would, very likely, in the course of time pass most of its time in the shape of a territorial army, those who might launch at the Chinaman as a warrior, but when China had 40 or 60 millions of trained men ready for work may be 200 or 300 years hence, he thought the

CONFUCIAN IDEA OF PEACE.

upon earth instead of fighting would come out, and that huge population and empire would be able to say to the rest of the world: "Now, gentlemen, you must settle your disputes in another way; there must be no more fighting." It was one of the things he looked forward to as a possibility of the future, considering the Chinese character and the effect of the world upon China in the future. Regarding

POLITICAL MATTERS.

unfortunately the two great people of that country had recently been carried away, the young Emperor and the very clever Empress Dowager, and now the land was being ruled by a comparatively new set of officials. The present Prince Regent, who went to Germany last year ago to obtain the unfortunate death of the German Minister at the beginning of the Boxer troubles, was a very able and very intelligent man, and he believed that he would carry on the new kind of work which had latterly commenced to show itself in China, work in the shape of progress. There would be railroads, extension of trade and of liberties; there would be a constitution, and there would be strength to stand without support from other people. Every year of his 54 years since in China had been an interesting life, and he had one of the most interesting lives of any man who had ever lived in connection with the new work and the new people and new surroundings, and in trying to get the right thing done and to get things done at the right time but it took a very long time in China sometimes to get things put through.

RECOLLECTIONS.

He recollected how in 1891 he told the Chinese officials that the appearance of steamers on the coast would interfere disastrously with their junk trade, and it would be well to remove the prohibitions existing against the use of steamers. His idea was approved of at the moment in a certain sort of way, but it was thought to be one to be considered well before the official replied, "Oh yes, you would have been doing it then twelve years to decide that that was the right thing to do. They were like an elephant feeling whether the ground was strong enough for it to stand upon; they went very slowly indeed. They had been so much accustomed to a certain kind of life through 3,000 years, that they did not want to change it. Speaking to one of the highest officials of the country some years ago about some unfortunate quarrel that had occurred, he asked him, 'Is there any way of getting rid of this quarrel?' 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Sanitary Board Elections.

MR. SHELTON HOOPER AND DR. FITZWILLIAM APPOINTED.

RECORD VOTING.

The elections for the return of two members to the Sanitary Board caused by the retirement of Mr. Henry Humphreys and the expiration of Mr. Shelton Hooper's term of office took place at the City Hall this afternoon, when, contrary to former precedents, a great deal of enthusiasm was manifested by the general public, on whose votes the return of the two members depended. Shortly before the hour of four, all sorts and manner of people from practically every business house in the Colony wended their way to the scene of the polling, and it is thought that this shows some interest in the public affairs of the Colony (although any good which emanates from the Board doubtless redounds to each individual benefit) is a healthy sign of the times, and proves beyond a shadow of doubt the growing public spirit. The Returning Officer was Mr. C. D. Melbourne, who was assisted by Messrs. A. Chapman and G. A. Woodcock, who acted as scrutineers. Polling commenced at 4 o'clock, and in accordance with the usual formality required by law, continued till six. Among those who were seen taking part in the balloting were Commodore Lyons and several members of both the Services.

Mr. C. D. Melbourne read the notice and announced the names of the candidates, with their proposers and seconders, after which the voting commenced in real earnest.

The result of the poll was announced shortly after seven o'clock, and is as follows:—

No. of Votes.

Mr. A. Shelton Hooper 504

Dr. G. H. L. Fitzwilliam 343

Dr. E. A. Bellios 313

Mr. H. Percy Smith 107

As soon as the poll was announced, Mr. Shelton Hooper, in the course of a brief address in which he betrayed a sincere tone, said that he thanked the whole of the electors of Hongkong who had placed him that afternoon in the fortunate position of head on the list. He felt sure that this was not the result of prophecy, but he took it in the nature of a vote of confidence. During the time he was on the Board, he always advocated free criticism of the Government and its policy, and he carried out that policy in "the past without fear or favour. (Applause). He was glad to publicly state that he had no axe to grind. (Loud applause). In conclusion, he moved, a hearty vote of thanks to the presiding officer for the just way in which the polling was carried out, loud cheers greting the speaker as he retired.

Dr. A. Bellios, in seconding Mr. Hooper's motion, thanked those concerned for the just and upright manner in which the whole of the proceedings were carried out. He felt certain that he was voicing Mr. Percy Smith's opinion in saying that the fight had taken place without any ill-feeling. (Loud Applause). Mr. Percy Smith, in rising to speak, said, he endorsed all that Dr. Bellios had said. He was personally sorry for having failed to be returned, but—(here the speaker's words were inaudible to our representative. Loud and continued applause greeted the last speaker as he concluded his brief address.

Following are the names of the candidates with their respective proposers and seconders:—

AUGUSTUS SHELTON HOOPER, J. P.

Proposed by Sir Henry Spencer Berkeley.

Seconded by Mr. D. R. Law.

RAPHAEL AARON BELLIOS, M.D.

Proposed by Mr. William Leonard Carter.

Seconded by Mr. Francis Maitland.

GERARD H. LLOYD FITZWILLIAM, M.D.

Proposed by Hon. Mr. H. E. Pollock.

Seconded by Hon. Mr. Henry W. Slade.

HORACE PERCY SMITH, Ch. Acci. (two nomination papers).

Proposed by Mr. A. J. David.

Seconded by Mr. Ho. Fok.

Proposed by Hon. Mr. Wei Yuk.

Seconded by Mr. C. Latenz.

THE CHINA BORNEO CO.

ANOTHER LIGHTER BUILDING.

The usefulness of the addition of the slipway to the timber wharves of the China Borneo Co., Ltd., in which a large amount of Hongkong capital is invested, is beginning to be demonstrated. Ever since its completion the slipway department has been building lighters and launches not only for its own use, but for that of coal and other companies also in Borneo. According to advices received from Sandakan to-day, the Company are now working on a new lighter which will be supplied shortly to the Batu Puteh Estate.

DESERVED JAPANESE RESCUED.

TERRIBLE SUFFERINGS ON LEE HERMES ISLAND.

American papers publish the following telegram from Midway Island, dated Dec. 18:— "Street of weather which compelled the Commercial Pacific Cable Company's schooner *Il. Florence Ward* to deviate from her course from Honolulu to a cable station and run for Lee Hermes Island for shelter, was the means of bringing about the rescue of three marooned Japanese plumage hunters and saving them from starvation and death. The *Florence Ward* is commanded by Capt. George H. Plitz. She was bringing supplies here from Honolulu, when a heavy gale broke and she was compelled to seek shelter at Lee Hermes Island, eighty miles southeast of Midway. Distress signals were observed on shore and Capt. Plitz sent a small boat to investigate. Three Japanese sailors were found. Two were suffering from scurvy. The Japanese were immediately taken aboard the *Florence Ward*, where they were given food and clothing. Through an interpreter one of the Japanese said they had been for three months without food except fish and sea birds. No fresh water was obtainable and the men were compelled to drink distilled sea water. When a fire was required the men were compelled to light it by concentrating the rays of the sun upon small pieces of tinder through the crystal of a watch. According to the Japanese the schooner *Kioho Maru*, of Shingaw, Tokio, Capt. Sugita, put into Hermes about July 1 and landed four men to collect the plumage of sea birds. The *Kioho Maru* departed, leaving one month's provisions for the men on the island and intending to return and take them off. The vessel never returned. Soon after the departure of the vessel a terrific storm broke and huge seas swept over the island, carrying away most of the supplies and effects of the marooned men. On what was left they subsisted as long as it lasted. One of the men died from exposure and improper food and the other three men could not have survived long. The three are being cared for at the cable station and in a few days will be taken to Honolulu.

Italy's Sorrow.

CHINA'S SYMPATHY.

CANTONESE MUNIFICENCE.

Yesterday evening the Italian Consul-General received from the Canton Viceroy a further sum of \$12,000,000, amount of a public subscription amongst the merchants, gentry, &c., of Canton. This sum, like the first, was transmitted to the Italian Consul-General for Hongkong and Shanghai Bank, for the Viceroy. Acknowledgment and thanks were wired to the Viceroy last night by the Italian Consul-General.

We are informed that H.E. Chang, the Viceroy of the neighbouring province, has taken great interest in the relief work for the sufferers by the unparalleled disaster in Southern Italy. He sent at once a telegram of sympathy to the Italian Consul-General for Hongkong and Shanghai Bank, for the Viceroy. Acknowledgment and thanks were wired to the Viceroy last night by the Italian Consul-General. We are informed that H.E. Chang, the Viceroy of the neighbouring province, has taken great interest in the relief work for the sufferers by the unparalleled disaster in Southern Italy. He sent at once a telegram of sympathy to the Italian Consul-General for Hongkong and Shanghai Bank, for the Viceroy. Acknowledgment and thanks were wired to the Viceroy last night by the Italian Consul-General.

This morning the Italian Consul-General received from Mr. Tittori, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the following telegram:— "Italian Consulate, Hongkong.—In the name of the Royal Government I beg you to thank the Viceroy for his generous donation to the sufferers from the earthquake.—TITTORI."

The thanks conveyed in this telegram have been transmitted to the Canton Viceroy to-day.

PROF. OMORI'S STATEMENT.

Calabria in Southern Italy is a well-known earthquake zone. Great earthquakes occurring there are (1) that in 1638, causing 1,919 deaths; (2) that in 1656 with 2,042 deaths; (3) that in 1783, with 30,145 deaths (the year when the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius in Japan took place); (4) that in 1897 with 12,391 deaths; and (5) that in September 8, 1905, with 533 deaths. All these earthquakes originated in Calabria or in the sea west of that district, but not always in the same place.

The earthquake of December 28 was distinctly recorded on the seismograph in Tokyo. The tremor began at 1.32 52 p.m. (Japanese time) preceded by a slight tremor lasting for 11 m. 26 sec. The earthquake therefore began at 1.19 33 p.m. of Japanese time, that is, 10.23 a.m. of Italian time. Judging from the duration of preliminary tremor the distance between the centre of earthquake and Tokyo is 2,440 m.; the actual distance is 2,470 m. The tremor was not palpable to the physical sense in Tokyo. It continued for about one hour and a half, and its maximum vibration was 1 mm. latitudinally and 13 mm. latitudinally. This was 2 1/2 times as large as the earthquake in Italy in 1905. Judging from the fact that Bagnara, on the west coast of Calabria, suffered severely, and that a tidal wave occurred on that coast, the centre of tremor was in the bottom of the sea near that coast, probably in the south of the centre of tremor of 1905. Reggio and Messina, situated along the Messina Strait, must have suffered from tidal waves.—*Japan Times*.

FORMOSAN GOVERNMENT FINANCE.

ESTIMATE FOR COMING FISCAL YEAR.

The estimate of the Formosan Government for the coming fiscal year (from April 1900 to the March 1901), which was under examination by the House of Representatives, has now been submitted to the Finance Department. The revenue of the island is estimated at ¥3,275,449, representing both ordinary and extraordinary revenues, and the expenditure at ¥3,234,547, both ordinary and extraordinary. Compared with the estimate for the present fiscal year, the revenue shows a decrease of ¥1,595,879 and the expenditure of ¥1,636,779. The principal item in the extraordinary expenditure is the cost of lumbering on Mt. Taishan, proposed to be taken over by the Government, upon which it is proposed to spend ¥1,600,000. The proposal has awakened strong opposition in many quarters, it being regarded as a sacrifice of public funds to the profit of a private merchant, and it is expected that the question will arouse a great deal of discussion in the Diet. Arisan is a well-wooded hill in Formosa, on which lumbering was undertaken a few years ago by Mr. Fujita, a well-known business man of Osaka, but this enterprise has proved a failure and it is alleged that Mr. Fujita, seeing that he was involved in a heavy loss, appealed for assistance to the Government or the Premier through Marquis Ito, who is on intimate terms with Mr. Fujita. The Formosan Government now proposes to take over the business, for which ample compensation will be paid. It is regarded as strange that while Government mills in Japan are being transferred to private concerns, a similar business in Formosa should be taken over by the Government. The matter forms a striking example of the inconsistency of the Government policy in these matters.—*Japan Chronicle*.

ANTI-PLAGUE MEASURES.

According to a vernacular report, Mr. Aglen, Commissioner of Customs at Hankow, is taking a serious view of the discovery of plague-infected rats in Shanghai on account of the consequent danger of these animals arriving at the inland port in steamers and being the means of spreading plague there. He has requested the Consuls at Hankow to start a rat-destroying association and to instruct foreign merchants to fumigate all godowns in order to kill the rats in them. He has also asked the Taotai to order the Chinese local authorities to co-operate in the matter by issuing proclamations ordering the Chinese inhabitants to kill rats and to bring them to the association for reward. The Hankow Taotai promised to order the Hailow Magistrate and the Police authorities to make satisfactory arrangements with Mr. Aglen and the foreign settlement authorities to co-operate in stamping out any traces of plague.

SANITARY BOARD.

MR. HUMPHREYS'S VALEDICTORY ADDRESS.

In our last Tuesday's issue, we gave the address to the members of the Sanitary Board by Mr. Henry Humphreys, the retiring member of the Board, in a brief form. The following is a verbatim report of that gentleman's remarks.

"The three years that I, and my colleagues, Mr. Hooper, have represented the taxpayers on this Board, have involved, probably the hardest work that any such representatives have ever been called upon to perform, owing principally to H.E. Sir Matthew Nathan's opposition to all the officials of this Board, a commission to inquire into the working of the Health Ordinance.

What that Commission meant in the way of work and much of the corruption it exposed, the Colony is to some extent familiar with. The spectacle of \$10,000,000 squandered every month during the plague season on an unknown and untried disinfectant, of thousands of dollars paid out every month to unknown Chinese contractors without business premises and without even a printed form for their bills, will, I trust, never again be presented to the community.

The Sanitary Board as a Board could not be asked to share the blame in any way because prior to this state of affairs the Government had transferred practically the whole of the executive arrangements to a Sanitary Department composed entirely of Government Officials.

The Government's answer to the Commissioners' report was to still further enmesh the wings of the Board by transferring all matters connected with buildings from the Board to the Building Authority. I am not sure this is not a good move. It certainly should save time; but good or bad, it reduces the work to be done by the Board in the future to a mere nothing and its fortnightly meetings have already become a farce. For this reason, if for no other, I take my leave of the Board without a single regret.

THE OPIUM QUESTION.

STRAITS COMMISSION REPORT.

It has been equally a puzzle to know why the Government in England were so anxious to huddle up out of public knowledge the Report of the Straits Opium Commission, and why, so late in the day, and for no discoverable reason, they finally telegraphed consent to its publication, although manifestly, owing to typographical difficulties there could not possibly have been that simultaneous publication in England and the Straits Settlements that they made the vital condition of publicity, namely, the Singapore Press. That of course, for no reason that would bear statement, much less survive criticism. A clue is, however, provided by a telegram appearing in the Indian papers from Regent's agency.

The telegram is dated London Jan. 4th, and reads as follows:— "The Daily Mail and Telegraph publish a long summary of the report of the Straits Opium Commission, including the main recommendations of the Commission, which urges that the Opium question be dealt with by increasing contributions from the Singapore Government. That will irritate people in Singapore, it is an extremely strange thing that two prominent newspapers in London should have been able to publish a long summary of the Report of the Straits Opium Commission, when the Imperial Government had interdicted publication either in London or in Singapore, under its absurd condition of simultaneous publication, which was made to depend upon the scanty resources of the over-worked, under-staffed and under-supplied Singapore Government Printing Office, could have been completed with. That there has been a leakage somewhere is obvious, either in London or in this Colony, and the fact that that leakage took the form of communication of a 'long summary' of the Opium Commission Report to two London newspapers must be held to explain why the steed being stolen, it occurred to the mind of the Secretary of State that to continue to keep the stable door locked was a work of supererogation. There is room for much speculation as to the circumstances under which Lord Cromer, finding the 'gaff had been blown' in London, rushes out by cable permission to publish in Singapore that which had already become common property in London. If the secret had not been exploded in London, we should, according to the Secretary of State's original orders, have remained in ignorance of the contents of the Commission's Report until the poor Singapore Government Printing Office had again gone through the ordeal of printing off a dozen or more successive sections of the voluminous report, and the Government, by retreating and resetting the inefficient supply of type between each section. That was what in cold blood, and from motives of economy to the Imperial exchequer, the Colonial Office proposed should be the course to be followed in producing a Blue-book for the information of Parliament. The low level of the morality of the whole stratagem is only equalled by the meanness of the financial motive, but we have no right to cavil at a Liberal Government being convicted of its own illiberality out of its own mouth.

As the old friends of the colony, we expect from a pig, but a grunt, and we have scriptural authority for doubting whether the Ethiopian can change his skin or the leopard his spots. With the publication of the gist of the Opium Commission Report staring them in the face in two morning newspapers the Colonial Office saw that the game was up, and made a virtue of necessity by according permission for what could have been got without its intervention in course of mail, or even possibly by cable. But it is a point to be considered whether even if such irregularly obtained information reached this Colony while the interdict against publication stood against the Government in Singapore, it would have been correct to have made use of that without consulting the Colonial Secretary. It is no part of ours to hazard theories as to the mode by which the two London newspapers came into possession of a long summary of the Report of the Straits Opium Commission, before permission was given by the Colonial Office for publication and the character of the Report into account, it would be very difficult to discover from the Report itself why the Colonial Office thought fit to deny the public of this Colony access to it for so long a time. We cannot profess to be in the least grateful to the Colonial Office for a permission which it only accorded when its hand was forced by premature publication in London. But still, we are satisfied that, whatever be the reason, the Report is now published; and the people of this Colony are able to examine the case, and the Commissioners for themselves, and endeavor to study the situation in all its bearings, the relation of cause and effect in this incident, we may merely point out that the unauthorized publication of the 'long summary' of the Report took place in London on Monday, January 4th. On Wednesday, January 6th, we were courteously informed by the Hon'ble the Colonial Secretary that the Colonial Office had now, by cable, accorded permission for the Straits Opium Commission Report to be published in Singapore. The point in this case is, a very decisive explanation of the

RESCUE AT SEA.

STARVING FISHERMEN ADRIFF.

The following report has been received from Captain Matheson of the s.s. *Kumano Maru*, which arrived last Wednesday morning:— "The *Kumano Maru* left Nagasaki on the 15th inst. and on the following day, at sea, about 255 miles off Niigata, a signal was seen from the waters as if calling for assistance. Captain Matheson steered his vessel towards the object and, on getting near, saw it was a fishing junk with seven Niigata men on board who were in a state of starvation through their provisions having run out. A gig was immediately lowered from the *Kumano Maru* and the second officer went with it with a plentiful supply of provisions and fresh water for the starving men, enough to last them several days for the voyage home.

FISHING JUNK LOOTED.

TWO MEN MAKE A BIG HAUL.

Details of another robbery, the victims this time being boat people, have reached the police. For perfection of method and barefaced impudence, the Chinamen are perhaps unequalled. It appears that on the night of the 13th inst., two men boarded a fishing junk in Yau-mai Bay. The men carried revolvers and knives. No sooner had they gained a footing on the frail craft, than they proceeded to carry out their nefarious plans. After driving the crew into the hold, they investigated every nook and corner of the vessel and succeeded in appropriating one pillow-box, two pieces of clothing, three pairs of socks, one pair of shoes, one pair of binoculars and \$140 in cash. They then departed, leaving their unfortunate victims to make the best of the situation. The robbery was afterwards reported to the Police, who are now investigating the matter.

SAD SEQUEL TO LOVE STORY.

A WOMAN'S ANGER.

A very serious stabbing affray took place last night at Gutzlaff Street, which is a lane running into Queen's Road from Lyndhurst Terrace, in which a Chinaman was disarmed and had to be removed to hospital. The victim, as far as we are given to understand, is a "boy" employed at 35, Lyndhurst Terrace. At one time, he loved an amah, whom he recently threw up and back himself to Macao, where he transferred his affections to another woman whom he subsequently married. The amah, feeling that she was greatly insulted, resolved to be even with her quondam lover, and with this purpose in view, she hired a number of men to "trim" her. They met the victim, youth in Gutzlaff Street last night, when one of the men, knocked the unfortunate one down and stabbed him in the stomach. Sergeant Foley, who was on the scene, soon appeared to see what was on after-hearing a whistle. The assailant withdrew the knife and handed it to the sergeant, who arrested two men, together with the amah. The victim's dying deposition was taken last night. It is said that the wounded man, who is in a precarious condition, is not expected to live. In the course of a few days, the suspects will appear to answer a charge, perhaps, of murder.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES.

CLAIM AGAINST A WOMAN.

The action brought by Messrs. Goldring, Barlow and Morrell, solicitors, against Minnie Hayden, of Wyndham Street, to recover \$350 for professional services rendered, was concluded in the Supreme Court, last Wednesday. On Tuesday, Mr. Justice Gompertz adjourned the case to allow the defendant to produce a witness, who was to speak of a verbal agreement and a document to show that she had paid a certain amount of the claim already. Mr. O. D. Thomson (for the plaintiff) said that since the adjournment he had discovered that the sum of \$15 had been paid by the defendant and this reduced the claim to \$335. Judgment was given against the defendant for \$325 and costs.

THE "KAIFONG" DAMAGE.

\$3,000 CLAIMED.

Three thousand pesos damages have been asked by Smith, Bell and Company from the Pilots' Association at Ililo for injuries caused by the British steamer *Kaifong* in being run on a rock in entering the harbour of Ililo on December 24 in charge of one of the pilots of the association, says the *Ililo Times*. The alleged grounding could not come to a unanimous decision as to the cause of the accident and the placing of the blame, two holding that the pilot was guilty and one that he was not. Another board was appointed and the report of this board was that the pilot in charge of the vessel, Cipriano Vidal, was wholly to blame for the accident. In view of this finding the local agents of the vessel asked damages of the Pilots' Association to the extent of \$3,000.

In replying to the demand the Pilots refuse to pay any damage but offer to pay half the expenses of the board, or \$700. It is understood that the agent asked the collector of the port to enforce their demand for damages but that official has no authority to take any such step.

In the meantime Pilot Vidal, who was suspended during the investigation, asked the collector for leave and was granted a month. The agents of the vessel refused to base this pilot on any of the Butterfield and Swire vessels entering or leaving the harbour, and in view of this fact the other members of the association requested the collector to ask for the resignation of Pilot Vidal, which matter will be taken up at the expiration of the leave granted him.

JAPANESE SHIPPING.

The following is self-explanatory, as showing the remarkable progress made by the shipping of Japan of late years:

The transport *Soudan* arrived at Southampton on 14th ult. from Hongkong, on the conclusion of a four month's trip. On the homeward voyage she called at Singapore, Colombo, Suez, Malta, and Gibraltar. The troops on board numbered about 1,400, and consisted entirely of details, including time-expired men and invalids.

ARMED ROBBERY.

FIVE YEARS' HARD LABOUR EACH.

The story of another armed robbery was related in the Supreme Court last Monday before Mr. H. H. J. Gompertz, Pulano Judge, and the following jury:—Messrs. P. F. Nicholson, J. Lyngaht, E. H. Neave, J. M. McHutchon, E. G. Smith, F. O. Day and P. Davidson. In this case, three Chinamen were charged with committing an armed robbery at Chuen-wan on the night of the 27th November. The Hon. Mr. W. Bates-Davies, Attorney-General, instructed by Mr. Dennis, of the Crown Solicitor's office, was for the prosecution, while the defendants were unrepresented.

The facts of the case, as briefly outlined by the prosecution, showed that on the night of the 27th November last, the accused men, who were disturbed by a number of armed men, who raided several shops and held up the occupants, a considerable amount of property was stolen from different shops as the result of the unexpected robbery. The matter was reported to the Police, who proceeded to the scene of the outrage at about 11 p.m. and found the whole village in an uproar. A few days later, Detective-Sergeant Wilden effected the arrest of a number of men who were alleged to have taken part in the robbery. They were put up for identification, and about 25 men, the three defendants were picked out by the witnesses as suspects. A certain amount of stolen property was found in their possession, which was also identified as that belonging to the village. At the time of the outrage, the prisoners were armed with revolvers and axes, with which they are alleged to have threatened the people.

Corroborative evidence was taken and a sentence of five years' hard labour was passed on each of the prisoners.

A RAILWAY SCHEME.

CANTON-MACAO LINE.

According to a Canton dispatch, the following is an outline of the railway scheme which the Ministry of Posts and Communications proposes to carry out in the Kwangtung province. The Canton-Amoy line is to be constructed by the gentry and merchants who have undertaken to do so. The Canton-Macao line is in the contemplation of the Ministry. The Canton-Wuchow line is being considered by the people of the two Kwang provinces. The Fatsuan-Kaohou line, which will connect the districts of Fatsuan, Shunto, Sinhu, Shing, Keping, Yangking, Kaohou, the Lienchou-Kiaochou line, the Kiaochou military line on the frontier and the Lienchou-Nanning line from Lienchou, Pakhoi to Nanning, are all awaiting survey and consideration. It has been decided to defer the Kaohou-Yulin line, which will be from Kuangchow Bay to Yulin through Kaohou.—*N. G. D. News*.

NEW JAPANESE WARSHIPS.

Five Japanese warships are to be completed this year. They comprise the battleships *Setsuna*, the armoured cruisers *Ibuki* and *Tone* and the destroyers *Isomami* and *Ayanami*. In addition to these, work on two submarine boats is expected to be finished.

HONGKONG VOLUNTEERS.

BLAKE SHIELD.

The following has been selected by the Committee to represent the No. 2 Company, H.K.V.C. in the Blake Shield Rifle Competition to be held on Saturday, 6th February, 1900:—Capt. G. P. Lammert, Lieut. J. Andrew, C. S. M. Glyn, Sergt. E. A. Chapman, Bomb. H. Quick, and Gunner D. Tolan. The remaining four to complete the team will be selected later from among the following:—Sergeant A. E. Crappell, Corp. H. C. Sayer, F. M. Crawford, Bomb. F. Masak, F. E. Wilkin, Gunner G. G. Catchick, and Gunner A. M. Marshall.

The Committee request that the above mentioned members will take every opportunity for practice.

The following special shoots have been arranged and it is hoped that as many as possible do so will make it a point of being present. King's Park Range, Sunday, 24th January, at 2 p.m.

King's Park Range, Thursday, 4th February, at 2.30 p.m.

It is also requested that all scores made at these and other practices be returned to the Hon. Secretary.

SIR EWEN CAMERON'S FUNERAL.

A memorial service for Sir Ewen Cameron, K.C.M.G., held at Holy Trinity Church, London, on December 14, was attended by some 300 mourners. Amongst those present were Mr. Allan Cameron (son), Mr. Mann (son-in-law), Mr. A. M. Townsend (brother-in-law), Miss Townsend, Lady Hart, Lord Alwyne-Compton, Sir Alfred Dent, K.C.M.G., Sir Thomas Jackson, Bart., Capt. Jackson, Mr. Houchins, Mr. W. McLean, Mr. W. G. Rathbone, Mr. W. Harwood, Mr. H. Harwood, Mr. C. Midgley, Mr. H. R. Coombs, Dr. Harrison, Mr. Johnston, Mr. James Dadds, Mr. S. Gilliland, Mr. W. Cartwright, Mr. A. G. Angier, Mr. A. P. McEwen, Mr. Douglas Jones, Mr. Strachan, Mr. J. P. Reid, Mr. F. J. Marshall, Mr. Geo. Brown, Mr. A. G. Wood, Mr. J. A. Maitland, Mr. J. Howard Gwyther, Mr. Francis Walsh, Mr. A. Burman, Mr. McDowell, Mr. Peter McLean, Mr. D. C. Campbell, Mr. W. Nicholson, Mr. J. H. Bolt, Mr. J. Stubb, Mr. Garston Stewart, Mr. Saunders, Mr. H. E. R. Hunter, Mr. Koch, Mr. A. Leith, Mr. Wm. Walter, Mr. Philip Arnold, and many members of both the home and foreign staff of the Hongkong and Shanghai Bank. After the service the coffin, which was covered with beautiful wreaths, was taken to the Crematorium at Golden's Green. The remains were afterwards forwarded to Inverness for interment at the Tomnahurich Cemetery. The funeral took place on the next day at Inverness. The chief mourners were Lady Cameron, Mr. Allan Cameron (son) and Mr. Cameron, Mr. Eric Mann (son-in-law), and Mrs. Mann, Miss Mackay (sister) Mrs. Mackay (sister), Miss Mackay, Mr. Mackay, Mr. A. M. Townsend (brother-in-law) and Mr. J. P. Reid. The chief mourners were followed by three pipers belonging to the Cameron Highlanders, who played "The Flowers of the Forest" and "The Land of the Leal."

The Ministry of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce has a scheme in hand to establish a Cotton Spinning Mill at Peking, and it is stated that a deputy has been sent to investigate the number of spindles in use by that Company, what the daily output of yarn is and its fineness, what sort has the best consumption and where the best cotton is produced, so that the new concern may have the benefit of all information.

THE CHINKING COLLISION.

S.S. "SINGLER" PATCHED UP.

The Chinese steamer *Singler* (late *Victorio*) which was lately in collision with the Japanese steamer *Yokohama Maru* steamed into Chinkiang on January 11, and moored alongside of the s.s. *Canton*. She will discharge all of her cargo into the s.s. *Canton* for transportation to Swatow.

Two of the foreign staff and some workmen from the Vulcan Works had put a temporary patch in her bow, and after discharging part of her cargo in the forward hold, the lights, she was able to proceed to Chinkiang under her own steam.

Her damage appears to have been considerable, as her stem above the water line was snapped off for about three feet, and the rest bent and twisted. A dozen plates will have to be renewed, and repairs to ten frames, and three beams, a broken bit, a broken fore-topmast, a broken hawse pipe, besides some minor repairs.

The ship after discharging her cargo will proceed to Shanghai for repairs, perhaps docking as well.—*Shanghai Times*.

ALLEGED OPIUM SMUGGLING.

BRITISH ENGINEER ARRESTED.

Alexander McCormick, second engineer of the steamship *Rubi*, which arrived in port last Tuesday, was found in possession of 69 punces of opium and was arrested by James P. Lawler, chief of the secret service department of the bureau of customs, reports the *Manila Globe* of 16th inst.

In connection with the arrest of Mr. McCormick, W. G. Zewon, the ship's first officer, said he had never before known the first officer making the arrest and his fellow officer, and thus made it possible for him to attempt to escape. He has been charged with interfering with an officer in the discharge of his duties.

He was also arrested and together with McCormick was removed to the Manila police station where they are held under order of the court to appear for arraignment to-day. Charges were filed against them yesterday afternoon by the prosecuting attorney and bail of P1,000 for McCormick and P500 for Lawton recommended.

Breaking the laws against contraband opium is proving costly in Cebu. Here is a sentence just passed on a Chinese by Judge Williams there.

"The Court finds that the accused, on the night of Nov. 1st, 1908 and the early morning of the 2nd day of the said month, being a person unauthorized by law, knowingly had on board the steamer *Kaifong*, then anchored in the Port of Cebu, Philippine Islands, in his possession and under his control, a quantity of opium and that the accused therefore is guilty of the crime charged, defined and punished by Section 31 of Act 1761 of the Philippine Commission. No fact has been proven at the trial showing that the accused is worthy of any consideration of clemency; the appreciation of which is in the discretionary power of the Court under the law. On the contrary, circumstances exist which show the necessity of applying the sanction of the law in all rigor. For some time past the Port of Cebu has been acquiring a bad reputation being one of the principal centres of the illegal importation and distribution of opium. The law was enacted by the legislative power after exceedingly careful reflection and discussion, and the object of this law is nothing less than the preservation of an entire people from a threatening evil which has with sad consequence shown its poisonous power in these islands. The accused has knowingly defied the law and the power of this Government, and this Court will not

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